

P.28 **SIDELINE IN VOLUME**
Sports can stoke other niches

P.38 **NEW NIKON**
An APS-C leader

P.84 **NO LUCK**
Commercial work ethic

BE TWEEN

AUDREY WOULARD THINKS LIKE A KID

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72

©ROBERT SEALE



84

©AUDREY WOULDARD



64

FEATURES

- 64 The space between**
Audrey Woulard strikes gold in the tween market
By Jeff Kent
- 72 Exploring the human condition**
Memorable images come from meaningful connections
By Deblina Chakraborty
- 84 Making luck**
Wringing the most from any opportunity
By Eric Minton



On the Web

Find this and more on our home page:
ppmag.com

<http://ppm.ag/woulard>
More by Audrey Woulard

<http://ppm.ag/adamopoulos>
More by Alicia Adamopoulos

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<http://ppm.ag/pro2000>
Canon imagePrograf Pro-2000 color comparisons

imagingusa.org
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DEPARTMENTS

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 10 Editor's note
- 18 Giveaway
- 22 Merited
- 70 On the cover
- 98 Perspective
- 106 Final frame



FOREGROUND

- 13 Unique macaque behavior
- 14 Charge what you're worth
- 16 Magical vistas
- 18 Insure your drone
- 19 Portrait tips



SUCCESS

- 27 Drone explosion
- 28 High-volume dividends
By Stephanie Boozer
- 32 Compete by being unique
By Jeff Shaw



THE GOODS

- 37 Bowens Generation X flash
- 38 New APS-C leader:
Nikon D500
By Ellis Vener
- 44 Velvety smooth:
Venus Optics Laowa 105mm f/2 STF lens
By Ellis Vener
- 48 Print big:
Canon imagePrograf Pro-2000
By Ellis Vener



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Professional Photographer is the official journal of Professional Photographers of America

Director of Publications

Jane Gaboury
jgaboury@ppa.com

Senior Editor

Joan Sherwood
jsherwood@ppa.com

Associate Editor

Amanda Arnold
aarnold@ppa.com

Art Director/ Production Manager

Debbie Todd
dtodd@ppa.com

Editor-at-Large

Jeff Kent
jkent@ppa.com

Contributing Editors

Don Chick & Ellis Vener

Director of Sales & Strategic Alliances

Wayne Jones
(404) 522-8600, x248
wjones@ppa.com

East/West Region

Ad Manager

Tara Truitt
(404) 522-8600, x230
ttruitt@ppa.com

Central Region

Ad Manager

Marina Anderson
(937) 902-8217
manderson@ppa.com

Advertising Services Manager

Cheryl Pearson
cpearson@ppa.com

Advertising Services

Coordinator

Linda Rosendahl
lrosendahl@ppa.com

EDITORIAL OFFICES

Professional Photographer
229 Peachtree Street NE
Suite 2200
Atlanta, GA 30303-1608 U.S.A.
(404) 522-8600

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Directors

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M.Photog.Cr., CPP
awancket@ppa.com

Greg Daniel
M.Photog.Cr., CPP, F-ASP
gdaniel@ppa.com

Mary Fisk-Taylor
M.Photog.Cr., CPP, ABI, API
mfisktaylor@ppa.com

Barbara Bovat
Cr.Photog.
bbovat@ppa.com

Jeffrey Dachowski
M.Photog.Cr., CPP
jdachowski@ppa.com

Clark Marten
M.Photog.Cr., CPP
cmarten@ppa.com

Kathryn Meek
M.Photog.Cr., CPP, API
kmeek@ppa.com

Steve Kozak
M.Photog.Cr., CPP
skozak@ppa.com

Industry Advisor

Michael Hanline
mhanline@ppa.com

PPA STAFF

Chief Executive Officer

David Trust, CAE
trustd@ppa.com

Chief Financial Officer

Chief Operating Officer
Scott Kurkian, CAE
skurkian@ppa.com

Director of Certification

Julia Boyd, CAE
jboyd@ppa.com

Director of Events

Fiona Corbett, CMP
fcorbett@ppa.com

Director of Publications

Jane Gaboury
jgaboury@ppa.com

Director of Membership

Kristen Hartman, CAE
khartman@ppa.com

Director of Sales & Strategic Alliances

Wayne Jones
wjones@ppa.com

Director of Education

Angela Kurkian
M.Photog.Cr., CPP
akurkian@ppa.com

Director of Information Technology

Scott Morgan
smorgan@ppa.com

Director of Administration

Wilda Oken
woken@ppa.com

Director of Marketing and Communications

Carla Plouin
cplouin@ppa.com

Executive Assistant

Sandra Lang
slang@ppa.com

**Executive Committee of the Board*

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WORK IT

DO WHAT YOU LOVE (AND THE OTHER STUFF, TOO)

► “Find a job you enjoy doing, and you will never have to work a day in your life.” So promised Mark Twain. When we spend time doing things we love, we aren’t laboring. But Twain didn’t guarantee we’d enjoy every minute and every task on our to-do lists, did he? So you may have to work a few days after all, just to get done those less-than-enjoyable tasks like tax prep, budgeting, and cleaning the studio, backing up files, shopping cell phone plans, and hiring a plumber. The creative life is not endlessly glamorous.

One of the reasons I enjoy my professional life so much is that I get to spend a lot of time with writers, editors, designers, and photographers who produce interesting and inventive work. Where others see problems, these creators, collaborators, and entrepreneurs see compelling constraints. It’s inspiring to hear someone say “Yes, I can do that. I don’t know how yet, but I’ll figure it out.” That’s how magic happens.

As seems to happen in every issue, common themes unexpectedly revealed themselves as we set to work on our month’s collection of stories. As always, we set out to highlight the techniques that contribute to photo business success, whether those techniques are photographic or commerce-related. And as we make a plan for the issue, we have ideas and assumptions about what each story will convey. But there are always unexpected treasures in these stories and somehow they often relate to each other.

This month, the common theme is that you can simultaneously love your work while also adapting what you do to stake a greater claim in the market. In fact, this is often the very thing that separates aspiring professionals from actual professionals. For example, an aspiring professional might say “I love making photographs of graffiti. I haven’t sold one yet, but I’ll keep working at it because it’s my thing.” And an actual professional might say, “I love making photographs of graffiti. But since I couldn’t sell them, I started making photographs of high school seniors in cool urban settings. And I still make those artsy graffiti photos as a personal project.”

That’s what came to my mind when I read Melanie Anderson’s quote “I no longer wanted to be specified as a certain style of photographer. I want to be the photographer you call” (“Big Dividends from Sports,” p. 28). And again when I read Robert Seale describe why the “inverse fun rule” guarantees that corporate photographers will always find work (“Making Luck,” p. 84). And again when I read why Audrey Woulard now spends 98 percent of her time not photographing babies, which is what earned her a stellar reputation (“The Space Between,” p. 64).

Enjoy what you do, and if you want to thrive, be ready to adapt. •

Jane Gaboury
Director of Publications

COMING NEXT MONTH

Flawless

Some of the best from this year’s bevy of Diamond Photographers



LOAN COLLECTION / DAN MCCLANAHAN

Without a net

If you don’t have a proper backup strategy, you’re risking your business

Keep it up

10 Best practices for drone photographers

STAY IN TOUCH



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FOREGROUND

by Amanda Arnold

NESTLED TOGETHER

SCIENTIST RECORDS UNIQUE MACAQUE BEHAVIOR



©ALEXANDRE BONNEFOY

Japanese macaques display some peculiar (and adorable) behaviors—they wash potatoes with their hands, play with stones, and even hop on deer to catch a ride. But the macaques in Nagano and Shodoshima are unique for the behavior pictured here: huddling in tight groups.

Scientist Alexandre Bonnefoy, who captured the image “Fubuki” followed the primates through the fall, winter, and spring, docu-

menting their cultural behaviors, which differ by region. This huddling behavior among macaque family members in Nagano is affectionately dubbed *saru-dango* by the Japanese. According to Bonnefoy, *saru* means monkey and *dango* means “a skewer of Japanese sweet dumpling made from rice flour.”

The image won a Special Commendation award in the 2016 Royal Society Publishing photography competition. •



JUST SAY THE NUMBER

THE COURAGE TO CHARGE WHAT YOU'RE WORTH

► Who wouldn't want to make life- and work-affirming self-improvements in seconds? Mel Robbins promises that opportunity is real. Robbins, a speaker, author, and CNN commentator, will deliver the keynote address at Imaging USA 2017 next month in San Antonio. She'll provide insights into her five-second rule, a mental trick you can use to incite positive behavioral changes in yourself.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS STRUGGLING TO PRICE THEMSELVES AT THE LEVEL THEY DESERVE?

ROBBINS: Confidence is a skill that you build, not something that you're born with. At the beginning of your career you're going to low-ball yourself because you don't have

the confidence yet; you haven't had enough jobs yet. But what's going to happen is that you're going to get booked with a level of frequency that all of sudden your inner wisdom says, I don't want to do this for X. You're going to start getting annoyed at what you're being paid.

ISN'T BEING ANNOYED A BAD THING?

ROBBINS: Being annoyed is wisdom, and ignoring it undermines your confidence. Each time you have the feeling that you should raise your prices and you don't act on that, you're proving to yourself that your instincts aren't worth listening to. Confidence is the ability to trust the inner guidance that's constantly talking to you.

HOW DO YOU PUT THAT WISDOM INTO ACTION?

ROBBINS: Write down the number you want to charge and vow that the next call you receive from a potential client, you'll quote that number. If the client balks, say, No problem, I'll refer you to somebody who is less expensive. Don't come down on your price; you don't want to build a reputation that you'll drop your rate if pressured.

"That is a moment of courage," Robbins says. And it's one of the things she'll discuss at Imaging USA, Jan. 8-10, 2017: "How you find the courage you need every single day to stand by your beliefs and believe in yourself."

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TOP OF MIND
FOREGROUND



► New photo book “National Geographic Greatest Landscapes: Stunning Photographs That Inspire and Astonish” features breathtaking landscape photography from around the world. This image was made by San Francisco-based landscape photographer Dave Gordon and shows a section of the Golden Gate Bridge peeking out from a blanket of morning fog. (National Geographic Books, \$40) •







©ISTOCK

INSURE YOUR DRONE

PPA OFFERS GENERAL LIABILITY COVERAGE

► New regulations enacted this fall make it easier than ever to add drone photography to your business. But beyond passing the FAA's aeronautical knowledge test and being vetted by the TSA, you'll also need something else: insurance.

Even after you're certified by the FAA and have likely practiced hours with your flier, accidents still happen. Kristen Hartman, director of member value at PPA, points out that if your drone malfunctions or you make a mistake and your flier falls from the sky, you'll definitely want to be backed up by both equipment and liability insurance. That way your drone is covered if it's damaged, and you and your business are protected if the accident causes property damage or bodily injury.

PPA has negotiated with insurance partner Lockton Affinity to offer an affordable general liability drone endorsement add-on that

will protect you should your drone harm a person or a piece of property. This endorsement is available for \$150 a year for photographers carrying PPA's general liability insurance, which starts at \$236 a year. In addition, PPA's PhotoCare Plus policy covers drone equipment that's damaged in an accident. (The PhotoCare policy that's free with PPA membership doesn't cover drone equipment.)

"No matter how much you practice with your drone, there are always going to be unforeseen circumstances, like a gust of wind takes your drone or your battery pack gives out and dies," says Hartman. "Typically with drones, it's expensive because it's not just a little bit of damage. If it hits somebody, it's potentially very expensive. If it falls on a car and smashes the hood, your liability is very high. So you need to have insurance to protect yourself."

Until now, drone operators typically pur-

ACCIDENTS HAPPEN

"During one of my test flights, I had been flying at 250 feet and was bringing it down when suddenly one of the propellers completely shattered, causing the rig to fall straight down. Had people been there, it could have really done serious damage."

*Ron Jackson, M.Artist
Ron Jackson Artistry
Little Rock, Arkansas*

chased aviation insurance for general liability coverage, at more than \$1,000 a year. "This is one of the first policies that's out there strictly for drone photography," Hartman says, "and that's at a reasonable price point." ppa.com/insurance •



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TALK TO THEM

LIGHTING AND POSING TIPS FOR PORTRAITS

► Making a successful portrait hinges more on people management than on lighting and posing, according to Tim Kelly, M.Photog.Cr., F-ASP. He offers a couple of tips for creating great portraits:

BUILD THEM UP. To get a natural pose out of a subject, make them feel natural. This is best accomplished by asking engaging questions and being a good listener. Questions will vary by the subject's age, of course, but boyfriends, girlfriends, spouses, kids, grandkids, are a good place to start. "That's often where I find great portraits, in the middle of genuine, personal interaction," Kelly says.

IDENTIFY WHAT'S NATURAL. Some photographers set up specific lighting, have the subject sit, and start snapping away. But "nervous sitters who wonder when to smile while you're tinkering with your camera and lights won't likely yield an optimum result," he notes. Instead, Kelly sets up his lighting in a "general ballpark" at first. As he moves around the subject designing the space, he chats with him or her, observing facial expressions and body language to pinpoint the perfect relaxed countenance. Once that natural pose is identified, he finalizes the lighting setup and begins making images. "At this point, I never really have to ask for a smile or expression, as I can just get it with natural conversation."

Kelly will speak on this topic at Imaging USA 2017 in San Antonio. •



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Tim Kelly



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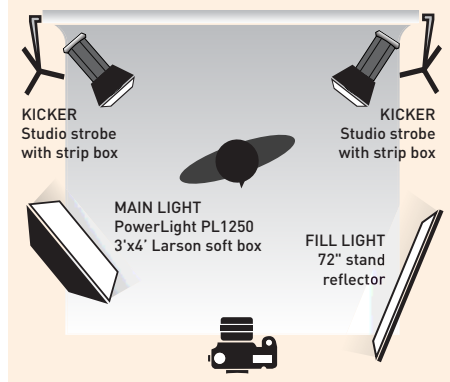


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IMAGES FROM THE PPA LOAN COLLECTION

- **CAMERA & LENS:** Canon EOS 5D Mark III, Canon 24-105mm f/4 lens
- **EXPOSURE:** 1/60 second at f/11, ISO 400
- **LIGHTING:** A Photogenic PowerLight 1250 was used as the main light with a 3x4-foot Larson soft box. A 72-inch stand reflector was used to kick light back as a fill. Two studio strobe kicker lights with strip boxes in the back corners directed light toward the subject.
- **POST-CAPTURE:** Kraemer imported the file into Adobe Lightroom and adjusted color balance and saturation. She used Photoshop for finishing enhancements and digital painting.

LIGHTING DIAGRAM



LOAN COLLECTION / ©SHELLY KRAEMER

REGAL

► Shelly Kraemer, M.Photos.Cr., CPP, was aiming for something classic and timeless with her image “Regal.” The subject is a wedding client who came to the studio for a formal portrait session. Shelly Kraemer Portrait Artist, based in Quincy, Illinois, specializes in family, senior, wedding portraits, corporate headshots, and sports photography. shellykraemer.com

ABOUT THE LOAN COLLECTION

The current Loan Collection comprises 1,085 photographs chosen for distinction by jurors of PPA’s International Photographic Competition. The compositions are considered the best of the best in contemporary professional photography, having been awarded the Loan Collection distinction based on their success in meeting the 12 elements of a merited image. ppa.com/ipc



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COOL KIDS

► Jamie Bard created “Cool Kids” by gathering together her muses: her children and nieces. “I knew I wanted them to look grungy and cool, so I dressed them in dark grays, blacks, and jeans,” she says. The image was made in her studio. Bard Photography is based in Grand Falls, New Brunswick, Canada, specializing in portrait and wedding photography. bardphotography.com

- **CAMERA & LENS:** Canon 5D Mark III, Canon EF 35mm f/2 IS USM lens
- **EXPOSURE:** 1/160 second at f/6.3, ISO 200
- **LIGHTING:** Bard used a Paul C. Buff AlienBees B1600 with a 32x40-inch soft box for the main light, an AlienBees B800 with a 60-inch octabox as fill light, and an AlienBees B800 with a 32x40-inch soft box for hair light.
- **POST-CAPTURE:** She used Adobe Bridge for small exposure and highlight corrections, Photoshop for sharpening and skin softening, and Alien Skin and Google Nik Collection for the grungy finish. She used Google Color Efex Pro to dirty up the image and Alien Skin Snap Art to create a painterly look.

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I would love to become recognized as a great pet photographer in my state and be able to have a greater impact on my community.

My true passion for pet photography came when I moved to the United States from Argentina with my Rottweiler, Simon. When Simon passed away in 2005, I decided I wanted to make a difference in the lives of other dogs by volunteering at my local shelter. As I bathed and took care of the animals, I would take their pictures, hoping it would lead to a loving home sooner rather than later. These dogs really touched my heart, filling the emptiness left behind from my loss. Now, I give that gift to animals everywhere—whether they are up for adoption or have already found their forever homes.

My two dogs give me daily inspiration. Working with animals is such a different ball game. Their energy is always amazing and we can learn so much from them.

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SUCCESS

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DRONE EXPLOSION

The birth of the commercial drone industry has been nothing short of explosive. By Oct. 1, nine months after the FAA began its Small Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Registry, more than a half-million fliers were registered. That's sky high compared to the number of manned aircraft currently in the United States, which enjoys a history more than a century old.

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Aviation Administration

500,000

REGISTERED AIRCRAFT

MANNED AIRCRAFT
320,000 IN 100 YEARS

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1916

100 YEARS

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Melanie Anderson

BIG DIVIDENDS FROM SPORTS

A VOLUME BUSINESS SEGMENT CAN STOKE ALL YOUR SPECIALTIES

by Stephanie Boozer

► Melanie Anderson, Cr.Photog., CPP, doesn't hesitate when asked what key elements have made her high-volume sports concentration a success: relationships, lighting, and efficiency. Over the past six years, her 11-year-old Hagerstown, Maryland, studio has become the go-to for schools and youth sports leagues in her area that want an outside-the-box team shot, earning her \$100,000-plus annually in that segment alone.

But while Anderson may dominate the highly stylized volume sports arena in her town, it doesn't dominate her. Diversification is another key element in her studio's success, she says, and her sports focus dovetails nicely with her senior, portrait, com-

mercial, and even wedding divisions.

"I realized a few years ago that I no longer wanted to be specified as a certain style of photographer," she says. "I want to be the photographer you call. I shoot volume sports year-round. It feeds my senior business, which leads to family, and through the senior banners we create, to commercial clients. They all feed into each other."

Being that diversified means you have to have a system in place, which is what Anderson has spent the past few years fine-tuning, and what she'll be speaking about at Imaging USA in San Antonio next month. She also intends to demystify the volume sports business for photographers stymied by the

concept of anything high volume.

"I'm here to say, 'Dive in!'" she says. "The money is there, the relationships are there, the business connections are there, and it's only going to help your studio tenfold. It's not as hard as you think."

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

In terms of relationship building and commitment, Anderson likes to think of her volume business with a boutique approach. She's grown slowly and smartly enough that she has a crew in place to help her, but that wasn't



always the case. Anyone can get into the volume sports game, even practicing solo, she urges. Just start small and build relationships. If another photographer in your area already has the market on lockdown, start building those relationships anyway.

"Nurture now, and prepare for your turn," she recommends. "I'm never for taking business from somebody, but I do believe in developing relationships. One day that photographer is going to be tired, or something will happen and he won't be able to fulfill something. That school will want to try something new. You have to be ready when the opportunity arises."

If you can't find an in with a large school or team in the area, broaden your idea about what a team is, says Anderson. Gymnastics leagues, ice hockey, dance classes, scouting groups, even the often overlooked school band are possibilities. Putting in the work to introduce yourself to these groups can be tiresome, but no risk, no reward, says Anderson. "People won't just show up at your doorstep."

A no-brainer for making connections is joining your local chamber of commerce. Anderson makes extra effort to get to know the superintendent of schools and especially to meet with as many school athletic directors as she can. She makes herself available by giving them her personal cell phone number and inviting them to call anytime.

"Start with one team, and get through one team," she says. "The way I started was that I wasn't happy with the team pictures of my own kids, and I asked if I could do it. The way you make money is behind a camera and in front of people making relationships, not sitting behind a computer. I could preach that all day long."

NAIL DOWN A SYSTEM

Knowing that her time is money, and getting through multiple teams at one school means little room for error, Anderson developed a system she can replicate anywhere. She takes time-wasting hassles like weather out of the equation by always securing a gym or cafeteria, or even a hallway if necessary. Shooting inside allows her to control the variables. With a set background and lighting system, she can space teams 15 minutes apart and work quickly through the day.

"Most coaches can't stand picture day because it eats into their practice time," she says. "I want to be efficient: Create a workflow and get it done. Parents appreciate that, too."

Anderson's setup is simple: a backdrop and three ring lights configured for individual and group shots. Once the setup is in place, she moves quickly. For the group shot, she lines up the team in a single row, and individuals are clipped out later to build the more stylized team picture and senior ban-



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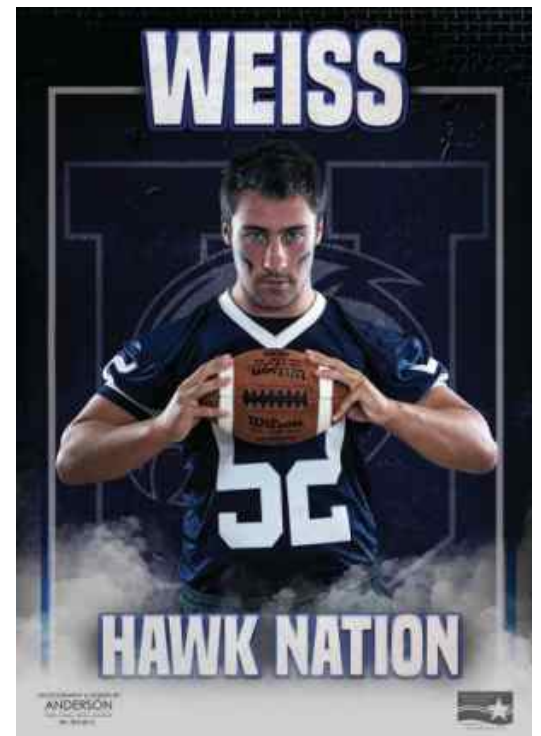
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ners. After the session, she, her team, and contractors (if needed) turn around the end product in two to three weeks. She's a big believer in outsourcing work that either eats up too much time or isn't a strength.

For smaller setups—30 to 50 kids total—it doesn't make sense for her to travel to a location, so Anderson creates the same setup in her studio. The team must commit to paying \$40 per player, which guarantees income for her time.

"Everything I do is with impact and intentionality," she says. "Otherwise why do it?"

BE CREATIVE

Once you've shaken the hands, nurtured the relationships, and delivered the reliable results, it's time to work out the ongoing marketing.

Take Anderson's banner idea, for example. Large-scale senior banners that hang in stadiums and gyms at every game create a huge visual impact. But rather than have the school or team pay for the banner, Anderson decided to go after local businesses to sponsor either a year or a season in exchange for prime logo placement on the banners and team posters.

"I use these banners as a huge marketing tool," she says. "When they're displayed at schools and the opposing teams come in, you're exposing yourself to hundreds of potential clients. My staff is trained to ask how each client heard about us, and the No. 1 answer we get is that we are everywhere—mall displays, doctors' offices, banners, social media."

Anderson's sponsored senior banners also lead to commercial work. Once she secures a sponsorship, she does research to see what that business might need—head shots? website images?

"You never know your potential until you put yourself out there," she says. "Once you see the fruitfulness, the braver you become. You have to create your own impact and stay focused. I always say, Don't stop when you're tired, stop when you're done. I'm tired, but I'm not done!" •

andersonphotographs.com

Stephanie Boozer is a writer in Charleston, South Carolina.

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Jeffrey Shaw

YOU CAN'T COMPETE WITHOUT BEING UNIQUE

AND YOU HAVE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THAT

by Jeffrey Shaw, Cr.Photog.

► No doubt there's more competition in the photography field than ever before, and it's not just with other pros. Today we face the competition of the cell phone camera, ever-more-affordable professional equipment, and the constantly evolving dynamics of how people spend their time and money. But I'm here to offer both a lesson and a solution to this real challenge.

THE LESSON

Before I delve into the solution, I want to share a lesson. I'm a huge proponent of personal accountability in business. Sure, we can whine about all the things that make being a photographer and a small business

owner challenging, but in the end it's up to us to do something about it. To wish things were different or to try to recapture some fictional golden past is a waste of time and energy that could be better applied to making a difference in your business.

In my 32 years as a pro, I've seen many changing tides. There have been times I've worried whether or not I'd be able to stay relevant. I've even wondered if those curmudgeons who foretell the end of our profession could be right. No. I'm still relevant and professional photography is alive and well.

If you want to make a living in this profession, I suggest you look at what role you're playing in what's been lost and what

role you can play in getting what you want.

Ian Chamandy is a strategic planning specialist and co-author of the book "Why Should I Choose You?" He proposes we find answers to the question of why clients would hire us. It's up to us to know that before we can convey it. In fact, he advises, we should ask a series of questions from a client's perspective: Why should I choose you? Why should I come back to you? Why should I pay more for you? The answers to these questions should be so obvious to clients that they don't even have to voice them.

I've always been struck by the oddity of the advice, Don't take it personally; it's just business. As photographers, we're in a business contingent on personal relationships. How can we not take it personally? And by taking it personally, I don't just mean the emotional impact on us but also our level of personal accountability. It's simply not good enough to complain. What are we willing to do to get the results we want?

THE SOLUTION

Now let me offer a solution on how to stand out in a competitive field. In today's business climate, our biggest foe is conformity. I'll be blunt: The photo field is a sea of sameness. Family, children, boudoir, product photographers—all of them are saying very similar things to their audience of clients and potential clients. If you want to stand out—and of course you do—you have to point out what's different about you in a sea of sameness.

Let me offer a couple of examples of photographers I've coached. The first is a boudoir photographer. When asked, "What is the result you want for the women you photograph?" she said, "I want to help women find their inner beauty." While this is a noble desire and a heartfelt reason to become a boudoir photographer, it's not

unique. So if that's the message you market, you've just plopped yourself in a pool full of similar photographers. And to be frank, the message isn't very inspiring. To help someone find her inner beauty implies the client doesn't know it's there. The message isn't uncommon or strong enough to compel a woman to pick you out of the crowd.

Upon digging deeper, the photographer realized that what she's passionately committed to is helping women love who they are—beautiful on the outside, beautiful on the inside. So we created the marketing message "Be unapologetically beautiful." It's what I call a standout statement, a powerful branding message that distinguishes you from everyone else and represents your values. "Be unapologetically beautiful" is an empowering message that many women will want to get behind. And some will want to hire this photographer because the message and the type of images she creates will resonate. In fact, that marketing message has been such a game-changer for the photog-

rapher that she has it printed on t-shirts, which she gives to all her clients—a terrific way to market her studio's work without having to post intimate boudoir portraits on social media.

My second example is a family photographer who was looking for a way to capture what she values most about families—that they go through a lot together. Tough times can challenge the very fiber of a family, and she wanted to set herself apart as the photographer who understands that and to call forward clients who stand strong together as families. So we created the standout statement "Unbreakable families, unforgettable portraits." I assure you, she's the only photographer out there promoting family photog-



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In both of these examples, the photographers have answered the all-important question, Why should I choose you? They'll be chosen because people like what they stand

for. Not only do they stand out, but there's genuine emotion in their core messages. Their messages compel clients to put their cell phone cameras aside and hire a pro.

In the end, how to stand out in a com-

petitive marketplace is to discover what makes you different. By different I don't mean your quirkiness. Discover what's different about your perspective. Each of us has a unique viewpoint because none of us has the same life stories and past experiences. What we encounter in life makes impressions, and these impressions affect our perspectives. The reason you're a newborn, child, or glamour photographer is different from anyone else's reason.

Whatever you're passionate about doing, discover what makes you different, and take a stand. Standing out is the only way to compete and succeed in professional photography. •



Jeffrey Shaw is a photographer, speaker, and business coach in Miami Beach, Florida. jeffreyslaw.com

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On location, a Generation X 500Ws XMT offers high-speed sync up to 1/8,000 second, super short flash duration, and rapid recycle as fast as 0.01 second. The lithium-ion battery swaps easily and delivers 500 full-power flashes from one charge. The 500, 750, and 1000Ws XMS models offer multi-voltage operation, and the XMSR model includes Bowens Sync Offset that allows high-speed sync with any camera brand.

Bowens Generation X is distributed by Manfrotto Distribution. Prices range from \$1,099.99 to \$1,799.99 per mono head. Kits range from \$2,499.99 to \$3,899.99. bowensusa.com



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NEW APS-C LEADER

NIKON D500

by Ellis Vener



PROS

- 20.9 megapixel CMOS sensor
- Native ISO 100 to ISO 51,200
- 4K video
- Improved computational power for autofocus, metering, and iTTL flash metering
- Bluetooth and NFC Wi-Fi
- A lot of versatility for the price



CONS

- No negatives to report

► In late summer I took delivery of Nikon's new professional-caliber APS-C format camera, the D500, thinking there wouldn't be much point testing it at low ISOs or in good lighting. Great performance with a camera of this caliber in optimal situations is pretty much a sure thing. Instead I wanted to look for a more difficult scenario. Ideally that would be fast, erratic action under bad lighting that would push the limits of the autofocus and metering systems and need high shutter speeds and high ISO settings. Water polo played indoors turned out to be an ideal testing ground.

At a time when full-frame DSLRs are common, why would someone choose to go with the physically smaller APS-C sensor? The best reason I can think of is depth of field. An APS-C sensor is 44.4 percent the size of a full-frame DSLR sensor, which means that if you were to shoot with a 300mm lens on a full-frame Nikon body you'd need only a 200mm on the D500 to capture the same angle of view. Not only that, but if you set both lenses to the same f-stop, the photo made with the shorter focal length would have greater depth of field.

Nikon users have been waiting a long time for a professional-level APS-C format replacement for the D300S, a 12.3-megapixel camera introduced in 2009 that was a minor tweak of 2007's D300.

Compared to the D300S, the 20.9-megapixel D500 has an additional 8.6 million effective pixels, and improvements in sensor and image processing technology have greatly expanded ISO range. Where the D300S had a range of ISO 200 to 3200 (with Lo1 at ISO 100 and Hi1 equivalent to 6400), the D500 reaches from ISO 100 to 51,200 (expanded with equivalents of ISO 50 at Lo1 and ISO 1,640,000 at Hi5).

According to DxOMark analytics, the larger sensitivity range is complemented by a much larger dynamic range as well: from nearly two stops at ISO 100 to 2.4 stops at ISO 3200. It isn't until you're at ISO 25,600 on the D500 that dynamic range falls to where the D300S at Hi1 (ISO 6400) measures.

The D500 incorporates greater computational power in the autofocus, metering, and iTTL flash metering modules. It can

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The Nikon D500 metering for ambient and existing light is terrific, as is the autofocus system.

©ELLIS VENER



To capture action without motion blur and under difficult mixed light sources meant shooting at 1/1,600 second or higher, and at f/2.8 with a Nikon AF-S 70-200mm f/2.8G VR II, even with the camera deep into four-digit ISO country. Here the Nikon D500 really excelled.

shoot at 4K video with clean HDMI output where the D300S was limited to 720p HD and USB 2.0 output. Finally, the LCD preview and live view screen is larger, brighter, and has higher resolution and contrast ratio, plus it tilts through a full 180 degrees.

The D500 uses SD and XQD media, which accommodates the move up from 720p to

1080p video and 4K. XQD is also very fast writing and reading and, coupled with the large buffer, allows you to shoot long sequences at 9 frames per second when you need to. The D500 also has Bluetooth and NFC (near-field communication) Wi-Fi, which opens up options for shooting and uploading. Wedding, sports, nature, pho-

tojournalists, and fashion photographers will appreciate the deep image buffer.

The body handling is typical pro-level Nikon: solid but not too heavy and well balanced with most lenses. If you're already a Nikon shooter you'll find the control layout intuitive. All of the major controls are well laid out and not easily confused with one another, and flicking the on/off ring around the shutter release lights up the top panel LCD and backlights the major control buttons. Based on my shooting priorities, my preference would be to have the location of the ISO and the White Balance controls switched, but that's a minor point.

TESTING

Water polo turned out to be one of the toughest sports I've ever photographed, especially when played indoors under a mix of high-pressure sodium vapor lights and indirect skylight. There is a non-continuous color spectrum, and each bulb flickers at a different rate. Though most of the really physical stuff is underwater, there's plenty of erratic, swift action at and above the surface as well.

The Olympics are brightly lit with television in mind, but high school natatoriums are decidedly not. The overhead lighting

meant that while faces and uniforms would be dark, there would also be bright direct reflections on the water and protective headgear. To eliminate motion blur meant shooting at 1/1,600 second or higher, and the low light meant shooting at f/2.8 with a Nikon AF-S 70-200mm f/2.8G VR II even with the camera deep into four-digit ISO country.

In these circumstances the D500 really showed what it could do. Up to ISO 6400 the raw NEF images come out of the camera virtually noise free and needed no noise suppression processing to record fine detail way down in the very low end of the luminance scale and up into the bright highlights. Above ISO 6400, however, I began to see a need to apply noise reduction, and at ISO 12,800 the signal-to-noise ratio was such that details were being lost, though down in the darker quarter and eighth tones it was still better than I have seen from any Nikon except the D4S and D5.

I decided to go one step further and see how the images translated into big (22x33-inch) high-gloss prints made on a Canon imagePrograf Pro-2000, and they passed that test with flying colors.

One more note about noise and dynamic range. Rishi Sanyal of Digital Photography Review introduced me to a concept called ISO invariance. In a nutshell: With recent Nikon cameras (more so than Sony or Canon), in situations where you need high ISO to get a good exposure, if you choose a lower ISO and deliberately underexpose and compensate for the underexposure when processing the raw files, you can end up with an image that has a larger dynamic range and less noise. It goes against the expose-to-the-right approach, but it works. And it worked well with the D500, though you should test it for yourself before you put it into practice. Two caveats: It costs more time in processing, and you'll have to fight your instincts while shooting and previewing.

I cannot imagine a photographer being unhappy with the Nikon D500. It's fast, rugged, and handles very well. The metering for ambient and existing light is terrific, as is the autofocus system. Some may be put off by it not being a full-frame camera, but APS-C has its advantages, and the D500 delivers for its devotees. •

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Five Ways Photographers Can Be More Profitable, Confident & Inspired:

Like most professional photographers running their studios, Lisa Thayer of North Carolina spends much of her time working on her photography business. When she's not busy creating beautiful portraits, she's buried in the bookkeeping, paperwork and details that go along with keeping her small business sustainable and profitable. That doesn't leave much time for networking or being a part of a community of artists that can provide the inspiration and fellowship photographers need to succeed.

"About 70% of our time (as professional photographers) is spent behind a computer editing or doing business-type work and it can get lonely," Thayer says. "Being a people person, I love the 30% of time I'm spending with clients and people, but it can be challenging to be that lonely 70% of my business time."

There are a bajillion reasons to go to Imaging USA, and every year in January, more than 10,000 photography professionals start their year off with a jolt of networking and professional development. Imaging USA is the world's longest-standing and largest professional-photography convention and trade show and it's organized and held by Professional Photographers of America (PPA), the only non-profit organization that helps photographers become and remain more profitable.

Lisa initially joined PPA because she learned that first-year members receive a free all-access pass to Imaging USA. She explains, "I joined PPA three years ago in order to go to my first 'Imaging' for free. It's not just about the class you took; it's at least as much about the person sitting next to you. It's about who you're meeting...sharing those experiences to understand that you're not the only one going through it."

Imaging USA is designed to push you, photographers, out of your comfort zone and make it easy for you to create a whole new world of connections. Those who come are at an advantage: when you attend Imaging USA, you are assured to collect loads of photography tips, new techniques, business ideas, best practices, hands-on training, and lots of nuggets of wisdom that will fuel your business plan for the new year. And here are five ways Imaging USA helps photographers be more profitable, confident and inspired:

1. Specialty-Specific Class Tracks

You have hundreds of classes to choose from, both in formal classroom settings and on the trade show floor. You can fill your days and plan your schedule with sessions following different tracks including Wedding, Portrait, Adobe Tutorials, Drones, Sales, and much more! Step outside of your comfort zone and go to classes that are not always within your

specialty area. Expanding your horizons is always a plus and you WILL make new connections!

2. Parties!

The dance floor is often an easy way to make new friends. Whether it's at the opening party, closing celebration, or the Charities ¡Fiesta!, it will be easy to put your dancing shoes to work. Don't forget to bring your business cards: the networking opportunities are on point at Imaging USA. And, of course, bring your camera for tons of photo opportunities. After all, it's an event meant for photographers to have creative fun!

3. Trade Show

The Imaging USA Expo is one of the largest showcases of photography gear and products you'll ever see under one roof in the U.S. Brag to your friends back home that you saw (and played with!) the latest trends before anyone else. This year will include exciting new products like drones and, as always, lots of hands-on demonstrations and classes taking place right on the Expo floor!

4. Photography Exhibit

Want to see what award-winning images look like? Or get a leg up on competing in photographic competitions in 2017? Or simply browse through thousands of inspiring photographs? The International Photographic Competition (IPC) has an entire section on the Expo floor. You can even set up appointments with jurors to get feedback on your own images, and check out several classes offered right there in the IPC Merit Café. Three days of photographic competition know-how and mentoring await you, so don't be shy!

5. Professional Networking

There's no way you won't have found your tribe by the end of Imaging USA! This is home away from home for photographers! There are mentorships to sign up for, a first-timer's pairing program (where Imaging USA veterans guide participating newbies), and friendships to make that will last a lifetime. Check out all the networking possibilities or sign up to any of these programs at ImagingUSA.org.

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►► You, too, can beef up your business with advice and education resources available 24/7 from PPA. Consider joining PPA where close to 30,000 photographers already come in order to Be More Prepared, More Inspired, and More Profitable and go to Imaging USA for FREE this year!

ImagingUSA.org

Lisa Thayer attended her first Imaging USA several years ago and never looked back. For the professional photographer that struggles with a work/life balance, Imaging USA can open doors into a community you may never have thought possible. As Lisa says, "I tell people that Imaging USA in particular, but PPA in general, is where strangers become friends and friends become family."

Meet your new family this year at Imaging USA
in San Antonio, TX, January 8-10, 2017.
Register today at ImagingUSA.org/Register

"It's at least as much about the person sitting next to you as it is the class you took."

Lisa Thayer

• PPA MEMBER SINCE 2013 •



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- Merit Café with 15-minute classes all day (the best way to learn about photo competition)
- IPC Images will also appear at PPA's Grand Imaging Awards, and the winners will compete for the best of 2016's Loan Collection in six categories. Come watch the ceremony, it is open to all!

Step up your photography game! Get a jolt of inspiration to enter images in the competition next year!

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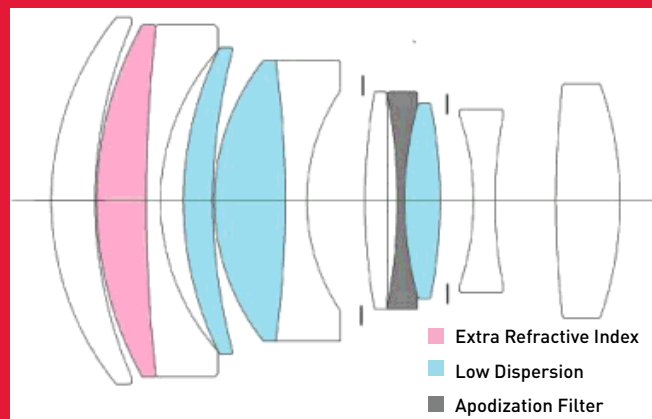
VELVETY SMOOTH

VENUS OPTICS LAOWA 105MM F/2 STF LENS

by Ellis Vener

► And now for something truly different: The Venus Optics Laowa 105mm f/2 Smooth Trans Focus Lens has two diaphragms, one marked in traditional f-stops and the other in T-stops. It differs from most modern lenses in its lack of mechanical and electrical connections between the camera body and lens, which means that not only is it manual focus, but the camera body and lens exchange no electronic information about aperture or focus distance settings. It even lacks automatic aperture return, the feature in most lenses that keeps the lens wide open for focusing and composing then stops down only during the actual exposure.

The metal barrel lens is made with a nicely dampened, long-throw focusing helix, and the optical formula is 11 elements in eight groups. One element is made of glass with an extra-high refractive index, three more use low-dispersion glass, and there's also an apodization element. The apodization element serves dual purposes: to increase resolution and, in conjunction with the T-stop diaphragm, to create smooth, visually pleasing transitions between in- and out-of-focus areas (the bokeh effect). Lens performance is sharp with excellent resolution and almost no inherent chromatic or geometric distortions.



ONE LENS, TWO DIAPHRAGMS

Why would a lens have two diaphragms with one marked in f-stops and the other in T-stops? And what's the difference? Whether it's marked or not, every lens has a T-stop value. The formula used to calculate f-stop values is $f\text{-stop} = \text{focal length} \div \text{diameter}$. It treats the lens as a simple hollow tube and doesn't account for the lens elements inside.

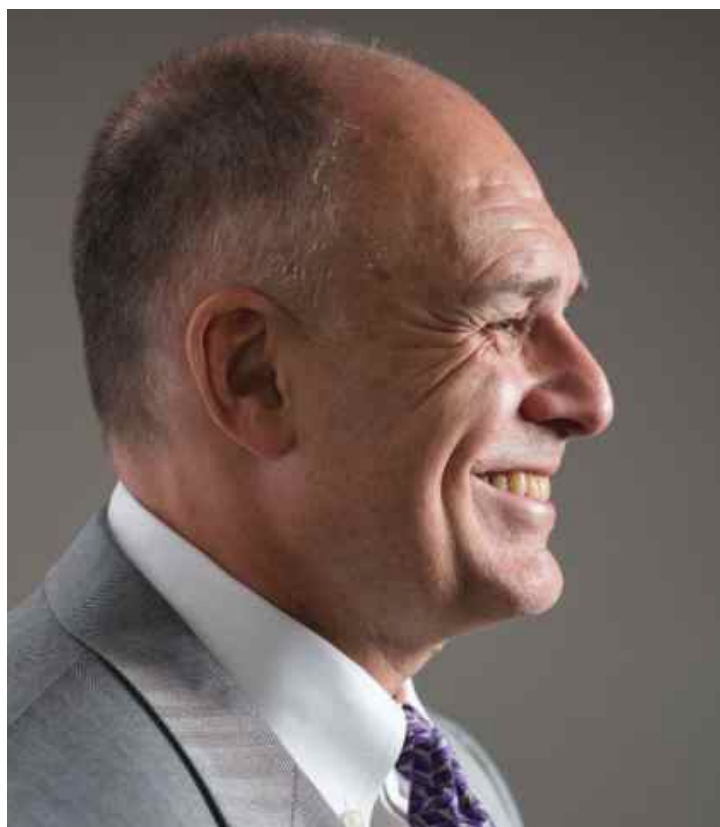
A lens element's shape and composition control the way it refracts and bends light, as do the groups in which elements are arranged, the coatings, transitions between surfaces, and even the glues used to bind elements in a group. All of these factors are what make a lens a lens, and all of these affect how efficiently a lens transmits light (its transmittance value).

The T-stop formula, $T\text{-stop} = \text{focal length} \div \sqrt{\text{transmittance}}$, takes all of these optical factors into account.

If you take only stills, the difference between a single lens' f- and T-stop values is generally irrelevant. But if you want to match exposures between different lenses it's relevant, and if you shoot video with a multiple-camera setup and you need to match exposures between those cameras it's crucial.

At full aperture, the Laowa 105mm STF is an f/2 lens and a T3.2 lens. The diaphragm marked with the T-stop scale has 14 blades, making for a completely round aperture, but it only stops down to T8.0. The second diaphragm has eight aperture blades and stops down to f/22. Additionally, the T-stop diaphragm is positioned to make full use of the apodization element.

An apodization element acts like a filter that improves the ability of the lens to resolve very fine points of light by blocking the spread of light around that point. Stopping down also does this—which is why almost all lenses are sharper about two stops down from full aperture—but only to a limited degree. The combined effect of an apodization element and the round shaped T-stop diaphragm increases fine detail resolution while smoothly blurring the transitions between in- and out-of-focus areas, creating the much desired bokeh effect. This is what earns it the Smooth Trans Focus part of its name.



©ELLS VENER

With a portrait subject you can take time to dial in focus using live view and get a beautifully crisp portrait using a lens that's economically priced.

Because the lens is completely manual, and especially given its lack of an auto-aperture mechanism, it's best used with live view on a DSLR. As an aid to dialing in sharp focus, Venus Optics uses a long-focus helix that requires a full 170-degree rotation of the focus ring to move the elements inside the lens from nearest focus—just under 3 feet—to infinity. The lens doesn't extend or contract as it's focused, and the 67mm filter mount doesn't rotate. As there are no electronic connections between the lens and the camera body, no EXIF information is communicated. However, using the lens with all forms of TTL metering worked perfectly fine, including TTL flash metering.

All in all, I was impressed with this lens. It's not for swiftly moving subjects but for portraits and setups where you have time to compose or when you can track a subject's predetermined movement, as in filmmaking. Its results are equal to or better than many other lenses, even some far more expensive models.

The Venus Laowa 105mm f/2 Smooth Trans Focus lens comes in Nikon F, Canon EF, Sony Alpha and FE, and Pentax K mounts. It retails for \$699. Adapters are available for Micro Four Thirds, Sony FE, and Fuji X mounts, which sell for \$20. Venus Optics is a small Chinese company created by a group of dedicated macro photography enthusiasts, and it's best known for unique macro lenses, including a 15mm f/4 wide-angle 1:1 macro lens that focuses from infinity to 0.185 inches and incorporates +/- 6mm of shift. •

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CHROMALUXE

PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER AARON REED

Q: HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN PHOTOGRAPHY?

A: In 2007, after picking up my first MP3 player, I purchased my first camera to photograph covers of my CD collection I intended to sell online. I found myself on a beach along the Oregon coast that weekend and decided to learn to use this unfamiliar piece of technology by taking photos of an old man digging for clams during sunset. It was so much fun that I decided to become a photographer that very day.

Q: WHAT TYPE OF WORK DO YOU SPECIALIZE IN?

A: I am a fine art landscape and nature photographer born and raised in the beautiful Pacific Northwest. I am based out of Sammamish, Washington. My work is focused on capturing nature in its most colorful and natural form. Every image that I create, once selected for release, is designated as an open edition or becomes a part of my limited-edition collection. My limited-edition pieces have strict production limits between 25 and 200 total pieces depending on the piece and regardless of medium or size. Once the final print has sold from one of my limited-edition pieces, it will never be offered again as a fine art print. My open edition pieces have no production limit. All of my pieces, both open and limited editions, are signed and numbered digitally by me prior to printing. Each piece I sell is issued a certificate of authenticity that is also signed and numbered, matching the piece itself.

Q: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU'VE FACED IN THE PHOTOGRAPHY INDUSTRY, AND HOW HAVE YOU OVERCOME THEM?

A: The challenges I faced as a beginning photographer were many of the same that we all face: finding the time, the money, and the self-confidence to keep pushing forward even when all of these things were in short supply. My answers to these challenges have become a part of my success as an artist. Instead of constant traveling, chasing the seasons and the next popular location, I have stayed relatively close to home and have stayed true to the images that I enjoy creating instead of what others have suggested I create.

Q: WHAT PRODUCTS CAN YOU NOT LIVE WITHOUT AS A PHOTOGRAPHER?

A: A solid tripod, a circular polarizer, and a good set of lenses.

Q: WHAT TRENDS ARE YOU SEEING IN THE PHOTO INDUSTRY?

A: The trends in the photo industry seem to travel in circles with new photographers catching a ride as these trends circle back around. I would argue that not all of the trends in photography are good for photographers or photography in general, but that is an entirely different subject. As an artist, I try to steer clear of the noise and what is "in" and just focus on myself and my own creative vision.



IMAGES ©AARON REED

Q: WHAT HAS CHROMALUXE DONE FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

A: ChromaLuxe has allowed me to offer amazing finished products that are lightweight, durable and vibrant, all without the need for expensive custom framing. It has allowed me to offer large limited-edition prints at affordable prices to more people, all around the world.

Q: WHY DO YOU LOVE USING CHROMALUXE?

A: It is the clean, sharp, and lifelike appearance that ChromaLuxe provides my images that I truly appreciate. These results are achievable without expensive gallery lighting or controlled environments.

Q: WHAT DIFFERENTIATES CHROMALUXE FROM OTHER PRODUCTS YOU'VE USED?

A: Before I began offering ChromaLuxe prints as my recommended medium, there was often a tipping point where my customers had to choose their medium based on size. A budget-minded customer may want a 40x60 print until they find out that framing a paper or acrylic print of this size often times is more costly than the print itself. With the ability to include float mounts or any other number of display options for my customers with no increase in overall cost, they are able to purchase the print they want, the size they want, at the price they want.

Q: YOU MENTIONED DURABILITY AS A REASON FOR USING CHROMALUXE. WHAT SEPARATES CHROMALUXE FROM OTHER PRINT MEDIUMS WHEN IT COMES TO DURABILITY?

A: The prints do not need to be framed or behind glass. Prints can be touched and if they get dirty for any reason, they can be easily cleaned off with a simple cleaning solution. You simply cannot get this kind of quality and durability from other mediums such as canvas or paper.

Q: HOW DO YOU SELL CHROMALUXE: INDIVIDUAL PRODUCTS, IN PACKAGES?

A: My entire business model is based around large-format limited-edition prints. While many of my customers purchase just one or two of these from me at a time, I have an increasing number of businesses that choose to outfit entire offices or buildings with my art. In these cases, I offer progressive discounts to add increased value to their purchase.

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PRINT BIG

CANON IMAGEPROGRAF PRO-2000

by Ellis Vener

► While printing can, and in some cases should, be outsourced, being able to offer customers large-format high-quality prints made in house can offer an increase in profitability and faster delivery times. When considering the cost of a printer, photographers need to take into account the ongoing operating costs of ink, media, and time.

Though the Canon imagePrograf Pro-2000 shares a lot of technology with the 17-inch Pro-1000 reviewed in our March issue ("New Pro Line"), its 24-inch roll media print capacity puts it on another level. The imagePrograf Pro-2000 features upgrades introduced with the Pro-1000: new formulations of ink, ink delivery, paper handling, and user interface that made significant improvements to the print quality and printing process. Compared to older Canon Pro Series printers, the 11 color inks and Chroma Optimizer in the Lucia Pro ink set gave smoother results in gloss and semi-gloss media as well as improved ink efficiency. In addition, the new paper handling system not only improved print sharpness and resolution, but it also allowed for borderless printing. The operating system became much clearer and more straightforward.

The Pro-2000 also features Canon's internal color calibration tools

that allow you to use the same media profile and get matching output from Canon Pro-1000, Pro-2000, and the 44-inch Pro-4000 printers.

Internal calibration yields lower operating costs at the beginning in terms of both time and money spent creating custom profiles for different printers. And if you prefer to use non-Canon media from companies such as Red River Paper, Moab by Legion, Hahnemuhle, and Canson, their profiles are comparable to the custom versions I made using the X-Rite i1Profiler system.

The imagePrograf Pro-2000 and 44-inch Pro-4000 are production printers, and using roll media is far and away a more efficient workflow, though you can also feed sheets into it one at a time. Roll media printers are larger, heavier, and initially more expensive than smaller printers, but savings from using roll media add up quickly. Roll media costs less per square foot than pre-cut sheets, and with larger capacity ink tanks there is a lower per-milliliter ink price, too. On top of that, Canon's inkjet nozzle technology is comparatively frugal to begin with.

Although the Pro-2000 can be placed on any table sturdy enough to support its weight and size, it's better mounted on the included stand, which makes it easier to move around and allows the option of adding a second roll feed system. The Pro-2000 weighs 223 pounds without the weight of inks and media. On the stand it measures 46 inches high, 43.7 inches wide, and 38.7 inches deep.

One prominent change between the older Canon iPF printers and the 24-inch imagePrograf Pro-2000 is the new roll feed system. Integration into the front of the body under the output and sheet feed table makes it faster and easier to swap out media. Mechanically, the longer travel path helps relax the naturally occurring curl in both cut sheet and rolled media prior to printing. As the media travels across the platen, negative airflow (vacuum) keeps the media flat to maintain a consistent



This shows the Multifunction Roll System installed on a Canon imagePrograf Pro-4000.

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height between the printhead and the media, and a positive air system advances the media. The end result is a print with greater edge-to-edge definition than you'll get from other printer designs.

An optional Multifunction Roll System attaches to the stand below the body of the printer. It allows you to add a second type of roll media and switch on the fly, or it can be used as a takeup unit for long prints or large multiple print orders, reducing the risk of print damage. This system is \$800 and can be ordered with the printer or added later.

The Lucia Pro inks and optimizer load into two easily accessible banks on the top rear of the printer. When the system is initially charged, much of the starter inks goes into the printhead and delivery tubes but it isn't lost; you'll go through a lot of media before you need to start replacing inks. Replacement inks come in three sizes, the 160ml PFI-1100, the 330ml PFI-1300, and the most economical 700ml PFI-1700. Canon further lowers operating costs by making improvements to the feed system and ink formulation, and the coating used on the inside of the tanks means every drop of ink you buy gets used.

Canon's promotion of the print quality from the imagePrograf Pro Series printers isn't just sales talk. My tests yielded fantastic results across an array of media. Canon supplied three papers for this review: Photo Paper Pro Platinum, a heavy, stiff, high-gloss media that incorporates optical brightener to exploit the full color gamut and contrast range potential of the Lucia Pro inks; RC Photo Luster, a lighter weight semi-gloss media with optical brightener; and Photo Paper Pro Premium Matte, a smooth matte surface paper that looks great for portraits and fine art prints. I also used Red River Paper's Palo Duro SoftGloss Rag, a beautiful heavyweight fine art paper. Before using non-Canon media, follow instructions for installing profiles and AM1X configuration files that allow you to add custom media types to the printer's firmware and driver.

Older technologies have given in-house printing a bad rap, but modern printers and software have mostly solved these problems. In this case, Canon's Print Studio Pro software greatly clarifies printing workflow and bypasses limitations imposed by computer operating systems.

Last, consider the deep satisfaction in holding and beholding a well-made print. Beyond the pride in knowing that you've crafted something fine, printing your own images makes you a better photographer because there's something fundamentally different between viewing a photograph on a screen and holding a print in your hands. It's a new level of commitment. When you have made a tangible print you truly own it, and that makes you want to do better the next time. •

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THU-FRI JAN. 5-6 PRE-CON

THE SECRETS TO SUCCESS WHEN TURNING PRO

Doug Box, M.Photog.Cr., CPP
Steve Kozak, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

2-DAY BUSINESS WORKSHOP FOR PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHERS

Ann Monteith, M.Photog.Hon.M.Photog.Cr., CPP, ABI, API, A-ASP

THU-SAT JAN. 5-7 PRE-CON

CPP PREP CLASS

 Al Audleman, M.Photog.Cr., CPP, API

CPP PREP CLASS

 Cris Duncan, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

THU JAN. 5 PRE-CON

CREATE A LOOK, STYLE AND BRAND THAT WOMEN HAVE TO HAVE

Marissa Boucher

THE REAL DEAL: CREATING EXCEPTIONAL FINE ART COMPOSITES

Richard Sturdevant, M.Photog.M.Artist.Cr.

FRI JAN. 6 PRE-CON

WOW-WORTHY FASHION TECHNIQUES FOR PORTRAITS

Lindsay Adler, Cr.Photog.

THE COMPETITION YOU CAN'T LOSE

Jessica Vogel, M.Photog.Cr., CPP
Timothy Walden, M.Photog.Hon.M.Photog.Cr., CPP, F-ASP

SAT JAN. 7 PRE-CON

THE BUSINESS OF BELLIES AND BABIES

Bree Adams, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

EXTREME VOLUME

Melanie Anderson, Cr.Photog., CPP

POST CAPTURE PRODUCTION FOR HIGH VOLUME PHOTOGRAPHERS

Bill Champion

REAL TEENS: BUILDING SELF ESTEEM AND SHOWING THEIR TRUE PERSONALITIES

Tomayia Colvin

LIGHTING AND POSING CHILDREN

Daniel K. Davis, M.Photog.

THINK GEEK: HOW TO WIN AT WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Kira Derryberry, Cr.Photog., CPP

BE BOUDOIR-LICIOUS

Kay Eskridge, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

CUTTING EDGE WIRELESS FLASH - HANDS ON TIPS AND TRICKS

Mike Fulton, Cr.Photog.

LIGHTING FOR COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Joseph Glyda, M.Photog.M.Artist.Cr., CPP

GROUP PHOTOGRAPHY CAN BE EASY... AND PROFITABLE!

Andy Gould

PHOTOGRAPHING HIGH VOLUME HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

Dann Kasalis, M.Photog., CPP

THE LOST ART OF POSING

Ted Linczak, M.Photog.Cr.

ROCK YOUR WORKFLOW

Linda Long, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

ALL THE WORLD IS A STUDIO

Michael G. Taylor, M.Photog.Hon.M.Photog.Cr., API, F-ASP

THE BUSINESS OF PORTRAIT AND WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY

 Lori Unruh
Jeff Poole

SAN ANTONIO ARCHITECTURAL PHOTO SAFARI

Randy Van Duinen, M.Photog.M.Artist.Cr., CPP

 WANT LOTS MORE FAMILY PORTRAIT BUSINESS? GO TO CHURCH
Chris Wunder, Cr.Photog.

 MISSION SAN JOSÉ WORKSHOP — CPP ONLY
Elizabeth Homan, M.Photog.Cr., CPP, API

SUNDAY JAN. 8

 **MEL ROBBINS KEYNOTE**
THE 5 SECOND RULE: ACHIEVE BREAKTHROUGH PERFORMANCE IN YOUR CAREER AND LIFE

 THE FINE ART COMPOSITE PORTRAIT
 Mark Bryant, M.Photog.M.Artist.Cr.

 SIMPLE TECHNIQUES FOR POSING PEOPLE IN GROUPS OF 2 TO 100....
Michele Celentano, Cr.Photog., CPP
Sponsored by: Canon

 LIGHTING WITH CONVICTION
Scott Detweiler

 SOLVING THE ALBUM CONUNDRUM: HOW TO SELL ALBUMS
Luke Edmonson, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

 INCORPORATING VOLUME WORK INTO YOUR PORTRAIT STUDIO
 Colleen Gonsar, Cr.Photog.
Sponsored by: H+H Color Lab

 THE MAGIC OF ONE LIGHT TECHNIQUE
 Joel Grimes
Sponsored by: Canon

 MAXIMIZING WEDDING ALBUM SALES FOR HUGE PROFITS
Ben Hartley
Sponsored by: Miller's Professional Lab

 SCORE IT!
Jamie Hayes, M.Photog.Cr., CPP, ABI, API

 CULTIVATING AND CARING FOR A HIGH-END CLIENTELE
 Allison Tyler Jones, CPP
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 SECRETS OF A SUCCESSFUL FINE ART PORTRAIT ARTIST - DYNAMIC LIGHTING AND POSING DEMYSTIFIED
Tim J. Kelly, M.Photog.Cr., F-ASP
Sponsored by: White House Custom Colour

 GET, GROW, AND DARE TO BE DIFFERENT IN THE VOLUME BUSINESS
Brandi Morgan, CPP
Sponsored by: Richmond Professional Lab

 SENIORS... THINK DIFFERENTLY...
Dan Rowe
Sponsored by: White House Custom Colour

 FINDING COURAGE IN BOUDOIR (AKA THE WORLD OF PHOTOGRAPHY ACCORDING TO COCO CHANEL)

Jennifer Rozenbaum

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 I WANT IT NOW: ONSITE PRINTING AND EVENT PHOTOGRAPHY

David Stana, Cr.Photog., CPP

Bill Vahrenkamp, Cr.Photog.

 4 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL

(Presented by the PPA Business Challenge)

Gregory Daniel, M.Photog.Cr., CPP, F-ASP

Mary Fisk-Taylor, M.Photog.Cr., CPP, ABI, API

Angela Kurkian, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

 PHOTOGRAPH! PROCESS! PRINT! THE FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS OF A TRUE ARTIST

Pete Wright, M.Photog.Cr.

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 BREAKING INTO THE HEADSHOT MARKET

 Moshe Zusman
Sponsored by: Bay Photo

MONDAY JAN. 9

 GET MOTIVATED TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

 Wayne Barksdale

 PORTRAIT SALES INTENSIVE

Sue Bryce

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 FAST RETOUCHING TIPS TO MAKE EVERYONE LOOK THEIR BEST

 Bry Cox, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

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 AWAKENING YOUR CREATIVE VISION

Alexis Cuarezma

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 DANCE STUDIOS: AN INSIDER'S VIEWPOINT

Daniel Fermain, CPP

Jennifer Fermain, CPP

 YOUTH SPORTS: HOW TO STAND OUT AND BE COMPETITIVE

Jeff Gump, Cr.Photog.

Leigh LaForest

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 BEYOND THE SPEED LIGHT... NEW SOURCES, NEW LOOK, NEW LIGHT

 Russ Harrington
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 LIGHTAPALOOZA!

John R. Hartman, M.Photog.Cr., CPP,

A-ASP, EA-ASP

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 MATERNITY INSPIRATION AND BEYOND

 Dani Miller

 SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST: STRENGTHENING YOUR BUSINESS

 Blair Phillips, Cr.Photog.

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 FEEL THE NEED FOR SPEED IN LIGHTROOM? WORK FAST, GET ORGANIZED, CONNECT WITH YOUR CLIENTS AND DELIVER ON TIME

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 OPPORTUNITIES AND CAREERS IN STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY

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 10 STRATEGIES TO DOUBLE YOUR PORTRAIT SALES IN 2017

Bradford Rowley

 LEVERAGING LANDSCAPE TO CREATE REMARKABLE WEDDING & PORTRAIT IMAGES

 Ken Sklute, M.Photog.Cr.

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 THE BUSINESS OF WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY

 Susan Stripling

 PRINT. THE MOVEMENT

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TUESDAY JAN. 10

 SIMPLE AND CREATIVE WAYS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN

Alicia Adamopoulos

WOW-WORTHY FASHION TECHNIQUES FOR PORTRAITS

Lindsay Adler, Cr.Photog.

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 STYLIZED FAMILY AND CHILDREN PHOTOGRAPHY

Kia Bondurant, M.Photog.Cr.

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 GETTING, CREATING AND SELLING FAMILIES

 Gary Box, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

Pam Box, M.Photog.Cr.

 "UNLEASH" YOUR INNER DOG PHOTOGRAPHER

Barbara Breitsamer, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

 QUICK FIXES FOR COMMON PROBLEMS

 Dave Cross

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 THE \$3,000 HEADSHOT

Megan DiPiero

 ON THE GO LIGHTING

Daniel Doke, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

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 HOW TO DOUBLE YOUR INCOME WITH PUBLISHING

Roch Eshleman, Cr.Photog., CPP

 HEADSHOTS 360

James Ferrara

 SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHY THAT'S WOW! PHOTOGRAPHY

 Neal Freed

 EVENT PHOTOGRAPHY: THE WHOLE PACKAGE

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 OFF-CAMERA FLASH SCARES ME

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 UNLOCKING PHOTOSHOP TO EXPAND YOUR CREATIVITY

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 HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS: SHOOT WITH PURPOSE

Alex McClanahan

Dan McClanahan, M.Photog.

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 THE HEART OF TRANSITION

Susan Michal, M.Photog.Hon.M.Photog.Cr.,

CPP, ABI

 WEDDINGS AND SCHOOL PORTRAITS: A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN

 Linda Russell

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 THE GREAT SALES ADVENTURE

 Ben Shirk, M.Photog.M.Artist.Cr.

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 BEYOND EXPECTATION: LEAVE LIMITATION BEHIND AND LIVE YOUR FULL POTENTIAL

Jeffrey Shaw, Cr.Photog.

 LIGHTING AND STORYTELLING

Ian Spanier

 BIG GROUPS DON'T HAVE TO BE A BIG CHALLENGE

Dave Stock, Cr.Photog., CPP

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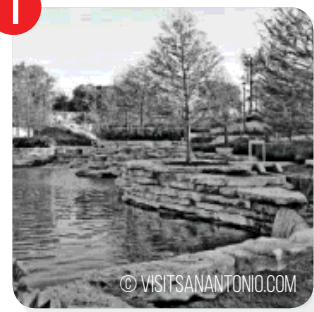
 ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY: TAKING YOUR IMAGES TO THE NEXT LEVEL!

 Randy Van Duinen, M.Photog.M.Artist.Cr., CPP

 TWEENS AND TEENS, THE NEW GENRE: HOW TO CAPTURE IMAGES THAT SELL!

Audrey Woulard

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Mel's TED Talk "How to Stop Screwing Yourself Over" has over 10 million views. Her book, Stop Saying You're Fine, is a best seller in four languages! Among her host of talents, she is also a CNN host, commentator and legal analyst, criminal defense attorney. And right after the keynote, Mel will host a book signing for her newest book: "The Five-Second Rule".



OTHER SPEAKERS WILL INCLUDE :

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- **Bree** Adams, M.Photog.Cr., CPP
- **Lindsay** Adler, Cr.Photog.
- **Melanie** Anderson, Cr.Photog., CPP
- **Al** Audleman, M.Photog.Cr., CPP, API
- **Wayne** Barksdale
- **Kia** Bondurant, M.Photog.Cr.
- **Marissa** Boucher
- **Doug** Box, M.Photog.Cr., CPP, API
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- **Pam** Box, M.Photog.Cr.
- **Barbara** Breitsameter, M.Photog.Cr., CPP
- **Mark** Bryant, M.Photog.M.Artist.Cr.
- **Sue** Bryce
- **Michele** Celentano, Cr.Photog., CPP
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- **Megan** DiPiero
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NOTE: All programs and speakers are subject to changes. For the latest information, visit ImagingUSA.org.



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1. ¡FIESTA! PPA CHARITIES CELEBRATION

Saturday, Jan. 7, 7pm VIP Reception, 8pm Auction, 9–11pm After Party,
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2. PPA CHARITIES SUPER HERO 5K FUN RUN

Sunday, Jan. 8

Registration 6:15am, Race begins 7am

Meet outside Convention Center – Lila Cockrell Theatre entrance

Get things running quite literally with a nice little early morning 5K around San Antonio. Just keep in mind it might be a little chilly (this is Texas but it's also January)!



3. PPA CHARITIES GENERAL MEETING

Sunday, Jan. 9, 2–4pm

Marriott Rivercenter, Room 17, Third Floor

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4. PPA CHARITIES DREAM STUDIO GIVEAWAY DRAWING

Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2:30pm

Booth #1055 in the Imaging USA Expo

PPA Charities is giving away over \$20,000 worth of photographic equipment, products, software, lab credits and more! Purchase your raffle tickets and join the excitement as they announce the winner at Booth #1055 on the expo floor.



5. PPA CHARITIES CAMERA DONATION

Sunday–Tuesday, Jan. 8–10, during Expo hours

Booth #1153 in the Imaging USA Expo

PPA Charities will be collecting as many working cameras as possible (with charger, battery and memory card) for Carolina for Kibera and ensure they are safely delivered to Kenya. Drop yours off at booth #1153 during trade show hours. For more information visit: cfk.unc.edu

PARTIES & PRE-CON!

Imaging USA is THE place to kick off a successful new year with 10,000 of your best friends! After long days of classes and shopping, you're going to need to let loose! Enjoy some amazing parties. Eat, drink and dance alongside fellow photography friends! Make new connections, find old friends and don't forget to bring your camera! The photo ops at these parties will abound. Would you expect anything less from the world's largest photography convention?

! These classes will fill up and sell out so be sure to register today at ImagingUSA.org!



IMAGING USA 2017 WELCOME PARTY

Sponsored by Canon

Sunday, Jan. 8, 8–11pm

Marriott Rivercenter Hotel, Grand Ballroom

Featuring live music from local band Matchmaker! Bring your camera for photo ops and enjoy dancing along with delicious food and drink!



IMAGING USA 2017 CLOSING PARTY

Sponsored by PPA

Tuesday Jan. 10, 8–11pm

Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, Tower View/Park View, Concourse Level

Featuring smooth sounds from our DJ, plus fun, food and dancing... the perfect cap to your Imaging USA experience! Don't forget to bring those business cards so you and your new friends can stay in touch!



PRE-CONVENTION PROGRAMS

There is so much to share, see and experience during Imaging USA that three days just isn't enough time! That's why you have THREE EXTRA DAYS prior to the convention to enjoy more in-depth and intimate pre-convention classes including:

THE BUSINESS OF BELLIES AND BABIES

Bree Adams, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

WOW-WORTHY FASHION TECHNIQUES FOR PORTRAITS

Lindsay Adler, Cr.Photog.

EXTREME VOLUME

Melanie Anderson, Cr.Photog., CPP

CPP PREP CLASS

Al Audleman, M.Photog.Cr., CPP, API

CREATE A LOOK, BRAND, AND STYLE THAT WOMEN HAVE TO HAVE

Marissa Boucher

THE SECRETS TO SUCCESS WHEN TURNING PRO

Doug Box, M.Photog.Cr., CPP, API

Steve Kozak, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

LIGHTING AND POSING CHILDREN

Daniel K. Davis, M.Photog.

THINK GEEK: HOW TO WIN AT WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Kira Derryberry, Cr.Photog., CPP

ROCK YOUR WORKFLOW

Linda M. Long, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

THE REAL DEAL: CREATING EXCEPTIONAL FINE ART COMPOSITES

Richard Sturdevant, M.Photog.M.Artist.Cr.

CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS AT IMAGING USA 2017

CPP EXAM

Sunday, Jan. 8, 1-3pm

Monday, Jan. 9, 1-3pm

Tuesday, Jan. 10, 1-3pm

Convention Center, Room 008, River Level

Candidates and CPPs who are up for renewal have the option to take the exam in-person at Imaging USA. You must register for the exam at least five business days prior to the date on which you wish to take the written examination. If you fail to register you will not be able to take the exam. Photo identification will be required upon arrival at the testing site. There is no fee associated with taking the exam in-person. Scores will be released via email approximately 2-3 weeks after the exam.

CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER PREP CLASS A

Thursday, Jan. 5-Saturday, Jan. 7.....9am-5pm

\$299 (for all 3 days)

Al Audleman , M.Photog.Cr., CPP, API

This class is your ticket to certification! This intensive, comprehensive course walks you through the technical topics you need to know for the exam. Inverse Square law, filter factors, color theory and H&D curves; lighting ratios, The Zone System, lenses, filters and much, much more! This prep class is not for the faint of heart but if you're serious about certification, this is for you. Work hard, study hard, walk away ready to launch your career to a new level!

CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER PREP CLASS B

Thursday, Jan. 5-Saturday, Jan. 7.....9am-5pm

\$299 (for all 3 days)

Cris Duncan, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

Getting certified is not for the faint of heart! It takes dedication, hard work and most of all, preparation. Join Cris Duncan for three days of intensive prep as you get ready to ace your exam! Spend your time covering all the technical topics that you need to know, inside and out! Whether it's Inverse Square Law, lenses and filters, Color Theory or The Zone System, it's all here – and more! Don't let yourself get overwhelmed. Break it down, piece by piece, so you can walk away a more polished, knowledgeable and confident professional. Work hard, study hard and take it to the next level!



IPC MENTORS AND CLASSES AVAILABLE AT IMAGING USA MERIT CAFÉ!

Get the inside scoop about the International Photographic Competition! Visit the IPC Merit Café while you're in San Antonio for Imaging USA 2017! You'll have the opportunity to get one-on-one advice from official International Photographic Competition jurors about how to improve your photos for the competition. These 15-minute sessions are limited, so be sure to sign-up for yours today at ImagingUSA.org/MentorProgram

IPC MENTOR SESSIONS

Sunday, Jan. 8.....12:30-5pm

Monday, Jan. 9.....12:30-5pm

Tuesday, Jan. 10.....12:30-3pm



Classes and demonstrations are also held on the Expo floor at the IPC Merit Café. Get there early and soak up all of the knowledge you can from these amazing International Photographic Competition (IPC) experts! Questions will be more than welcome, so ask away!

SUNDAY

12pm

WHY ENTER PRINT COMPETITION? THE BENEFITS BEHIND COMPETITION

Donna GoodHale, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

1pm

BREAKING DOWN THE NEW IPC RULES

Doran Wilson, M.Photog.MEI.Cr., CPP, F-ASP and
Rich Newell, M.Photog.Cr.

2pm

PITFALLS AND TRIUMPHS OF COMPOSITING IMAGES FOR COMPETITION

Kim Smith, M.Photog.M.Artist.Cr., CPP

3pm

THE IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL IMPACT IN YOUR IMAGES

Sandra Pearce, M.Photog.MEI.Cr.

4pm

THE IMPORTANCE OF GUIDE PRINTS IN THE MASTER ARTIST CATEGORY

Bob Coates, M.Photog.M.Artist.Cr., CPP

MONDAY

12pm

CLIENT IMAGES VS. COMPETITION IMAGES, IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

Cris Duncan, M.Photog.Cr., CPP and
Deanna Duncan, Cr.Photog.

1pm

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF RETOUCHING FOR PRINT COMPETITION

Carl Caylor, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

2pm

HOW DO I GET MY MASTER'S DEGREE AND WHY SHOULD I WORK TOWARDS IT?

Madonna Lovett Repeta, M.Photog.Cr.

3pm

THE QUEST FOR CREATING THE CREATIVE COMPETITION IMAGE

Michelle Parsley, M.Photog.M.Artist.Cr., CPP, API

4pm

CREATING EMOTIONAL IMPACT IN YOUR COMPETITION IMAGES

Allison English Watkins, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

TUESDAY

12pm

UNDERSTANDING PRINT PRESENTATION AND TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE

Dennis Hammon, M.Photog.Cr., CPP, F-ASP

1pm

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF ENTERING PHYSICAL PRINTS VS DIGITAL IMAGES

Shelly Kraemer, M.Photog.Cr., CPP

2pm

THE VALUE OF TITLES AND STORYTELLING

Dennis Craft, M.Photog.Hon.M.Photog.Cr., CPP, API, F-ASP

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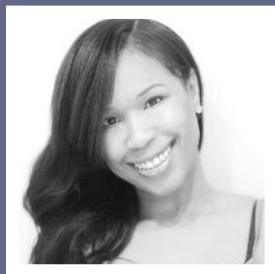


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Audrey Woulard

The space between

Striking gold in the tween market

When Audrey Woulard started her business 15 years ago, she was a baby photographer. She did great work, built up a loyal clientele through word of mouth, and developed a reputation as one of Chicago's best.

Then her subjects started growing up. Woulard decided to adapt her business accordingly. She became a child photographer, following the kids as they became toddlers, then elementary school kids.

The game continued to change, of course. All of those cute little kids were growing into young adolescents, aka tweens. It's a market segment many photographers avoid because it's not naturally tied to a major milestone, like newborn portraits or high school graduation. However, Woulard established a thriving market for her portrait photography by making a few adjustments

By Jeff Kent





to her approach. Tween portraits now make up about 98 percent of her business and have helped catapult her studio to a new level of success.

KID-FIRST MARKETING

"Twins drive the process 100 percent in terms of where they get their portraits made," says Woulard. "But parents make the buying decisions. So the marketing focuses on the kids, and the sales process focuses on the parents." This approach represents a difficult shift for many photographers. For Woulard, who had always relied on earning parents' personal referrals, the switch to kid-first marketing was an adjustment. However, it's been an adjustment with a multiplying effect. "In this age group, one person talks about it, and a thousand of them come," she says. "If you want to grow your business in tween photography, you *have* to appeal to the kids first."

Woulard dove into social media, learning how tweens communicate, and discovering the cultural norms for engaging the age group. "There are so many unspoken rules that the kids won't tell you," she says. "You just have to figure them out by observing. Listen to how the kids talk, what is important to them. Look at what they post on social media. They will give you all the clues you need if you are paying attention."

Woulard quickly learned that Facebook worked well for reaching parents but was nearly useless for tweens, who favor Instagram and, increasingly, Snapchat. On Instagram, Woulard shares the types of images that tweens prefer, which leads to rapid sharing of her work among subjects' friends. Facebook works better for promotional messages aimed at parents as well as sharing the types of images parents want to see.

While parents aren't the focus of the mar-

keting, they remain the critical last step in the process. The kids may generate the motivation, but ultimately it's the parents who pick up the phone and call. And that's the goal. "If I can get a mom to call me, I know how to talk with her," she says. "I let her know that I value her, that I understand what she is going through, what her child wants. It builds rapport and usually leads to a booking."

PORTRAIT AS PRODUCT

To break into the tween market, it's important to treat a portrait as a product, finds Woulard. What is that product? At the most basic level, parents want portraits of their kids that they can display in their home, while tweens want images that will play well on social media. But it goes a little deeper than that. "Really, tweens care most about the experience," says Woulard. "That experience includes getting their photo taken at



KATC THE MAGAZINE

Audrey Woulard's brand is centered on fashion, and she regularly stages sessions featuring new styles. Her work drew the attention of some designers and fashion publications, and she started to receive requests to contribute images to magazine editorials. "I thought, Why don't I create my own magazine?" she says. "Instead of using models, I'd use real kids, real clients."

So Woulard created *KATC The Magazine* (using an acronym for Kids and the City). The idea was to showcase new fashions on the kids to whom the designers are actually selling. Designers as diverse as Valentino and mom-and-pop Etsy shops are lining up to be included. They send Woulard the clothes, and she stages sessions with her clients.

An additional motivation was to keep the interest of her older clients

as they move from tween to mid-teen. The magazine features mostly high school freshmen and sophomores. It gives those kids a relevant fashion magazine filled with their peers, and it provides an aspirational feature for the younger tweens, who look up to those more mature teens.

The magazine has been a huge success, with print distribution in Chicago and New York and an online version.







the studio as well as the social media recognition that comes with the images.”

Tweens favor full-body images where they are standing somewhere cool, says Woulard. They also love photos that make them look a little more grown up. However, you can’t get too dramatic. Kids rarely post non-smiling, dramatic close-ups on their own social media accounts because it’s considered vain. “They don’t want someone thinking they are narcissistic,” says Woulard. “But *I* can post these types of images, and they are popular when they come from me. That’s all fine. It’s one of those unwritten rules.”

Parents want images of their children smiling and looking happy as well as close-ups that show their face. So it’s important to capture a variety of styles that can serve multiple purposes. “The key is knowing how to satisfy the kid and still get the sale from the parent,” says Woulard.

THE PHONE RINGS AND RINGS

Because she knows kids want to post something on social media, Woulard created Test Shots. “I tell them I am making test shots to get my settings right,” says Woulard. “They always make goofy tween faces while I’m doing this because there’s no pressure. If I can capture a few of those looks, the kids will post them. Parents will never buy those, so I never put them on Facebook. But the kids will put them on Instagram all day long. If I post a picture of a kid sticking out her tongue, I’ll get five phone calls.”

Many photographers have a hard time figuring out the success of the Test Shots program, maybe because they shy away from the idea of posting anything that isn’t well produced and perfectly professional. “I am more focused on getting clients in the door,” says Woulard. “I know that if I post a less-than-perfect photo with a tween and the kids love it, then the parents will go to my website and do some research. They’ll see other photos I’ve taken that are professional quality, and then the phone rings.”

FREE ADVERTISING

One of Woulard’s most successful programs is called BFF Shots. For these sessions, she allows her tween client to bring several friends, and Woulard creates portraits of the group as well as the individuals, but every-



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ON THE COVER

Audrey Woulard's tween clients get a kick out of nontraditional portrait sessions. She made this month's cover photo on a 4,000-square-foot rooftop in Chicago. "On the day of this 13-year-old's session we were going to get hit by a snowstorm," she says. "We thought it would be great to capture images right in the middle of the storm."

CAMERA & LENS: Nikon D800,

AF DC-Nikkor 135mm f/2D lens

EXPOSURE: 1/1,250 second at f/2.0,
ISO 400

LIGHTING: Natural light

POST-CAPTURE: In Adobe Photoshop, Woulard used curves and contrast adjustments, and she dodged and burned using the gray fill method.



thing focuses on the main client. "These sessions are all the rage," says Woulard.

"The kids absolutely love them, but they're really valuable as a marketing opportunity. If I go on Facebook and post pictures of all the girls in a BFF shot, then the other girls' parents see those photos and think, 'Oh, my daughter looks great, I will call Audrey.' It's huge for marketing."

For that reason, Woulard doesn't charge extra for the multi-subject BFF sessions. "You don't charge extra because this is free advertising," she says. "Do you want to pay \$1,000 to run an ad or take an hour out of your day to bring in some of the kids' friends and photograph them? Also, this is part of the experience for the client. When they have more fun, they are more likely to talk about it and share with their other friends."

TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITY

Woulard feels that the tween market doesn't get its due in the professional photography marketplace, and for that reason, it presents a tremendous opportunity. "If you are looking for a way to step out and separate yourself from the pack, this is a great way to do it," she says.

In part, Woulard thinks that many photographers skip over this age because they perceive it to be a harder sell. That could be a mistake. "People who aren't in this space don't understand what it's like to have a 13-year-old beg her mom for something until she gets it," says Woulard with a laugh. "Beyond that, though, and beyond all the marketing opportunities for this age group, I think the tween market deserves more recognition. It should be an age that is treated as a milestone as opposed to something that people skip over. After all, this is the very last stage when these kids are still kids. That alone deserves to be celebrated." •

katcteens.com



On the Web

More by Audrey Woulard
ppmag.com/gallery/audrey-woulard



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EXPLORING THE human condition



Alicia Adamopoulos

Memorable images come from
meaningful connections

By Deblina Chakraborty

“I love it when
people are very
raw and revealing
and it’s almost
like you can see
into their soul.”



It was dark where they were, with black plastic covering the windows and not much artificial light to speak of. Alicia Adamopoulos worked quietly in the shadows, camera in hand, like a satellite orbiting the drama unfolding in the space. At the center of it, a woman prepared to give birth to her third child.

A mother herself, Adamopoulos was no stranger to the emotionally charged atmosphere of hospital delivery rooms, but that 2007 shoot was the first time she was photographing a birth professionally. Her subject, who had two daughters and longed for a son, turned to the camera and sobbed when the new baby arrived.

"It's a boy!" she cried.

Adamopoulos, a master of photography as recognized by the Australian Institute of Professional Photography, remembers what it was like to see that mom's elation through the lens.

"[I was] behind the camera sobbing my eyes out," she recalls. "I've got goose bumps right now just thinking about it."

A native of Australia, Adamopoulos started her Brisbane-based photography business in 1999, focusing primarily on weddings and portraits, including maternity sessions. She's seen her share of clients' milestones, and birth photography is particularly special, she says, because it often involves a number of watershed moments.

"I love it when people are very raw and revealing and it's almost like you can see into their soul," Adamopoulos says. "There's a point in every labor when the mother goes from







being composed and knowing that there's a camera there to just going. Don't even care about the camera, don't care about anyone who's in the room, this is just me in my moment. And that's what I like. I think my favorite genre to shoot is birth."

It's certainly not the simplest of genres, though. As memorable as that first birth session was, Adamopoulos says the resulting images weren't anything to write home about.

"I went in there extremely unprepared," she confesses.

The lack of light was the main issue: Birthing rooms tend to be dark, but Adamopoulos had no idea that the mother had requested complete blackout in the room. Adamopoulos didn't have a lens with her that could handle extremely low light, and the family didn't want her to use a flash.

Adamopoulos now tries to head off similar predicaments by asking detailed questions in the initial client interviews. Similar conversations kick off all her sessions, but when preparing for birth sessions, she asks specifics regarding the entire birth plan, including the expected lighting conditions.

For birth photography, Adamopoulos recommends having two cameras on hand: one to get a wide shot of the room and the entire scene that's unfolding and another with a long lens that allows you to get close-ups without getting too near the subject.

As for the specific lenses Adamopoulos favors, she says it all comes back to the lighting. For a client who's OK with keeping the lights on, a 70-200mm lens is fine: It will handle the hospital lighting, which is often stark. If the room size allows it, Adamopoulos will go with a 135mm lens; if not, she sticks with 50mm on one camera and then maybe a 16-35mm on the other.

"The Sigma 50mm art lens is definitely a great lens," Adamopoulos notes. "And then the 16-35mm Canon lens is a good one as well. But if the light allows for it, the 24-70mm and the 70-200mm options can be used."

Perhaps most important, any equipment used in a birth session should be unobtrusive. Adamopoulos says she tries to be a fly on the wall so as not to interfere with the important work being done by parents and medical professionals.

"My method for birth [photography] is I'll only speak to [the subjects] if they speak to me," Adamopoulos says. "That way, they've



got the choice. I have had one mother who just completely ignored the fact that I was there. And that's fine because she just wanted to be in the zone. But then you've got some moms who are just like, No, no, you've got to talk to me and tell me about this because this calms me down. So I am whatever the mother wants me to be at that point."

Every birth photo session is different, of course, but Adamopoulos says the one image she always tries to capture is that first moment when mother and father see their baby.

"It's hard, because there are two things at

the same time that you could be shooting, which are the baby down at the end of the bed and the parents' expression," she says. "So you've really got to try to guess where the best angle is going to be to get all that, knowing that you could quite possibly be blocked by medical staff. Definitely, trying to get the emotion on the parents' faces is a big one for me."

Ultimately, Adamopoulos says the key to any great portrait—regardless of genre—is engagement. Whether it's engagement between the subjects, or engagement between

the subject and the viewer, she believes that for an image to be successful, there has to be an apparent connection.

For her, that often comes down to capturing the connection between family members in the delivery room. In other child photography, engagement starts with the initial conversation. Before photographing a child, for example, Adamopoulos typically asks the parents about the child's interests.

"That way I can be having a conversation about Pokémon with them or 'Five Nights at Freddy's,' and the kids get excited because



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“A long time ago, someone asked, ‘What’s your favorite thing to shoot?’ And I just said, ‘People.’ I do love just people. Whether it’s documentary, whether it’s outdoors or on location, whether it’s in a studio. I just like to explore.”

here’s an adult talking to them about something that they actually enjoy,” she says. “And then you can give direction. They’re more open to direction once you’ve made that connection.”

In maternity portraiture, another favorite genre of Adamopoulos’, the connection may come simply from understanding the subject’s frame of mind. Pregnancy, she suggests, is a time when many women brim with excitement and anticipation, but some also feel unsure of themselves and let down by their bodies.

“I like the challenge there of taking someone who maybe doesn’t feel so great at that point—and this isn’t everyone, but some—and giving them something where they’re going to go, ‘Wow, that’s really beautiful.’”

Diverse as her photographic interests may seem, Adamopoulos says she’s happy to explore the human condition in all its forms.

“A long time ago, someone asked, ‘What’s your favorite thing to shoot?’ And I just said, ‘People.’ I do love just people. Whether it’s documentary, whether it’s outdoors or on location, whether it’s in a studio. I just like to explore.” •

aliciaadamopoulos.com

Deblina Chakraborty is a writer in Denver.



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TIPS & TECHNIQUES

From the Pros

1 Consult Your Exposure Data

To insure the image visible on your LCD is correctly exposed and that controls for ISO, aperture and shutter speed are set to your liking, learn how to quickly access your camera's menu items and make it a habit to consult the histogram and other exposure data for every image that counts.

2 Replace Cards Every Couple of Years

Memory cards might not have any moving parts, but that doesn't mean they don't wear out. On the contrary they each have a finite life, and every time you write to, delete from or read the card you're bringing it another step closer to the end of that life. If you don't want to risk corrupting your pictures far from home, replace heavily used cards every couple of years.

3 Never Enough Memory

Bring extra memory cards or film into the field with you. Running out of memory or film is something you want to avoid as the best photos always happen right after your last memory card is filled or your last frame is captured. Pack more than you think you need and then add more.

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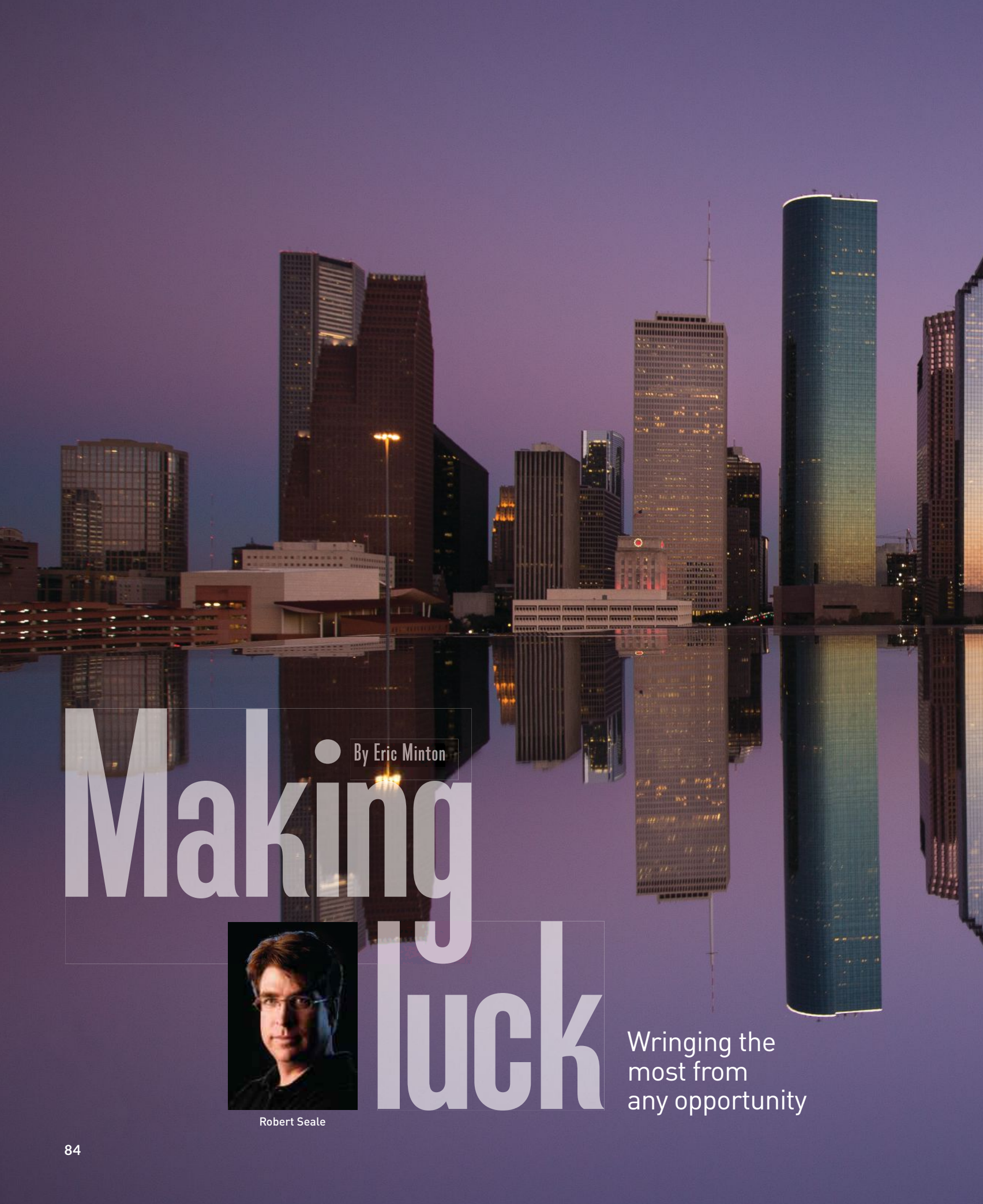
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● By Eric Minton

Making luck



Robert Seale

Wringing the
most from
any opportunity



The right place at the right time" usually connotes good luck. But for Robert Seale, it's a work ethic. When he landed in what seemed like the wrong place at a key moment of his photojournalism career, Seale reconfigured what fortune had handed him, using the job to hone his lighting and portrait skills. That launched Houston-based Seale on a path into sports, corporate, and aviation photography and a successful career as a freelance photographer.

Thorough planning and careful preparation is Seale's creed, exemplified in his image of the aurora borealis glowing green and purple in a starry, navy blue sky above a giant Caterpillar mining truck (relative size, a Tonka to the Matchbox cars we drive). Capturing the northern lights at their richest requires good timing and perfect conditions. So is this image one of luck and post-production skills?

"No," Seale says. "It's just being prepared and tested, like being a Boy Scout."

WORKING WITH CONSTRAINTS

The weeklong assignment required him to photograph a refinery in northern Alberta, Canada, and he wanted the aurora in at least one image. He had two obstacles: the refinery's lights created too much ambient light, washing out the heavenly host, and the weather forecast was cloudy or worse almost every evening. In scouting the environs, Seale found a ridge three miles from the plant. He asked the site manager to have someone drive one of the trucks to the ridge and park it in the middle of nowhere, Seale says, "with the idea that if we got a clear night, we'd get a shot."

One night while he waited in the recreation room with workers, they saw a break in the weather and headed out to the ridge. Using the moon and light painting, Seale captured the image with exposures of 30 seconds to one minute. "That was a preparation thing," Seale said. "We knew we needed this picture, we knew we wouldn't get it where the trucks were parked, so there was a lot of finagling to get that to happen. Fortunately, the site manager was a big fan of photography and enthusiastic, and he drove us out in the middle of the night."





Fostering relationships with clients is another factor in Seale's success. His portfolio gets him initial assignments; his efficiency and vision get him successive assignments. Efficiency is something he learned while photographing superstar athletes who have little time or attention for long photo shoots. "You can see it on their faces," he says: They roll their eyes with each camera or lighting adjustment. "Most photographers don't trust themselves or their preparation and say, 'Let me get one more.' Every time you touch your light, you risk

that athlete saying, 'Enough's enough,' and they're walking away."

The same constraints come with photographing corporate executives. When making portraits of athletes and CEOs, Seale determines the looks he wants, then sets up lights and cameras and tests each setup ahead of the subject's arrival. Seale then moves the subject from one setup to the next in quick succession. "I don't even touch the lights." Seale can complete a full portrait session with three different looks in a matter of minutes—or less. "If everything is in its



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IN HIS CAMERA BAG

CAMERAS: Two Canon EOS-1DX Mark IIs and one Canon EOS 5DS

LENSES: He shoots with a variety but his favorite is the Canon EF 24-105mm f/4 lens.

LIGHTING EQUIPMENT: He prefers Profoto and often uses his own battery powered units: Pro-B4s and -B2s, and AcuteB 600s. He rents Pro-8As or -7As as needed for bigger shoots. Most of his modifiers are Plume Wafers, but he does have a few Chimeras and Profoto boxes. He also uses Ikan LED panels.

place and tested, it's bam, bam, bam, shoot this one, then bam, bam, bam, shoot this one, and bam, bam, bam shoot this one. Then you shake hands and say, 'Great! Thank you for your time,' and they remember you. PR folks remember you, too."

Integral to such preparation is Seale's honed sense of lighting. A drilling rig bathed in its own lights in Germany looks like Oz at the other end of a farm field with its own lush glow in the gloaming. Two engineers study graphs lit by a desk lamp, supplemented by a strobe, while a seismic chart projected on the wall behind them is reflected in the desk's polished surface. A geometrically stark stairway sits between two oil storage tanks in England with a worker at the top highlighted by a single overhead lamp (actually, the highlight comes from a strobe clamped next to the lamp). "It's about balance," Seale says. "We're trying to make it look real, that the light that's there is the light





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“The hike through Maui’s Pipiwai Trail was long. Inside the bamboo forest, tall stalks obscured the sun so I was concerned it might be too dark to really capture Maui’s signature light. But emerging from the forest I faced a lush rock-carved pool and gazed through the mist at the majestic 200’ Waimoki Falls ahead. I grabbed my Sony A7R2 with a 25mm lens. On front were B+W filters, the 6-stop ND and the new, faster Käsemann HTC Polarizer. I shot in tight—capturing the intensity of the blue and green spectacle.”

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that would be there; we're just trying to amplify it." Seale limits Lightroom post-production in most cases to tone and color balance adjustments and vanity touchups on portraits.

PROBLEM SOLVING

While working toward a communications degree at Stephen F. Austin State University and a career in photojournalism, Seale decided to expand his expertise by getting a double major in art. Part of that curriculum involved creating lighting diagrams for images in classic photography books. To this day, Seale studies photography books and pores through magazines, clipping editorial and advertising photos for ideas and inspiration. "To me, everything you look at is a potential way of solving some kind of problem at some point," he says. "I look at every magazine I can get my hands on, I have more photo books than some libraries."

After graduating, Seale interned at the *Houston Chronicle*, then got a job with *The Augusta Chronicle* in Georgia. He returned to his hometown desiring to get back with the *Chronicle* and its strong photojournalism culture. Instead, he landed at the *Houston Post*, which lacked the resources of the *Chronicle*. In addition to covering sports and news, Seale was charged with doing studio photography for fashion, lifestyle, and food stories. "I was frustrated for a couple of months because this wasn't my idea of serious photojournalism," recalls Seale. "I sat down and told myself, This is where I am, why am I not working at it? If lighting is what we do here, why not improve?" He began volunteering for studio sessions and learned how to make the local dry cleaner owner look like he belonged in *Forbes*.

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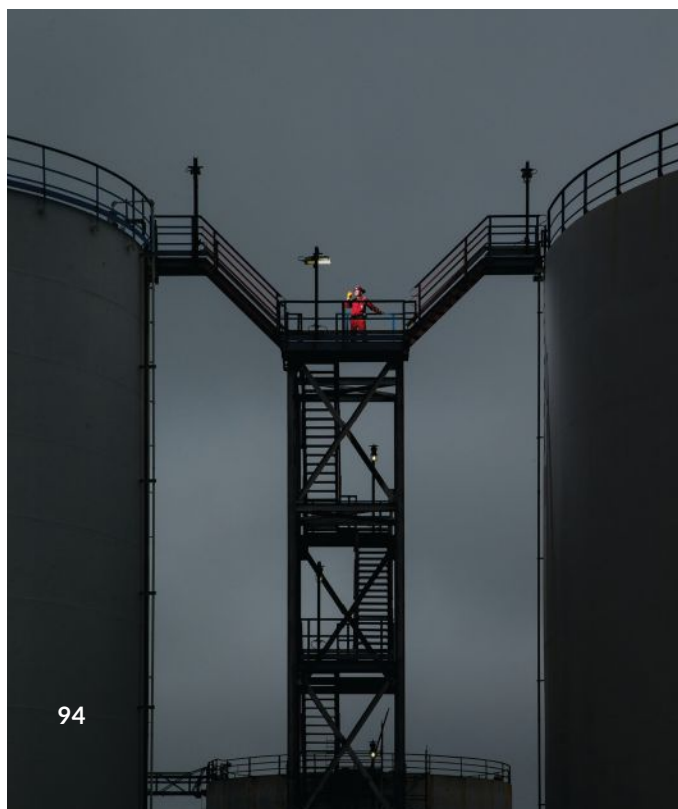
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"There's not a lot of people who aspire to go someplace where it's 4 degrees and shoot a chemical plant, or a product that's hard to light because it's shiny, or an executive who has 30 seconds and 10 people will get fired if it's not good. Corporate photography will be around forever because there's always the inverse fun rule."

These skills led to his next full-time employment as a staff photographer for *The Sporting News*, where he worked for almost 11 years. "I was good at action photos and portraits; they needed guys to do cover portraits." Seale parlayed that experience into freelance work for *Sports Illustrated*, *ESPN The Magazine*, *Men's Health*, *Businessweek*, *Barron's*, *Rolling Stone*, *The New York Times Magazine*, Major League Baseball, and, yes, *Forbes*. Regular assignments from *Smithsonian*, *Air & Space* have allowed him to indulge in his personal interest in aviation, and he's now collecting portrait sessions with World War II aviators.

SPARSE COMPETITION

Nevertheless, 75 percent of his work is corporate photography, capturing images for company publicity and annual reports. As magazines cut back on photography budgets, he says, "In the corporate world, budgets are tight, too, but there's still enough money and clients that you can travel more and get assignments." Furthermore, it's a genre requiring capabilities and diligence beyond those of most aspiring professionals.

It's the "inverse fun rule" in photography, Seale says: the more fun a topic, such as sports and concerts, the more people want to do it and, consequently, the lower the pay. "There's not a lot of people who aspire to go someplace where it's 4 degrees and shoot a chemical plant, or a product that's hard to light because it's shiny, or an executive who has 30 seconds and 10 people will get fired if it's not good. Corporate photography will be around forever because there's always the inverse fun rule."

It's also creatively rewarding for Seale. "Shooting an athlete on some level is pretty easy: They're in the prime of their physical prowess, and they look good, and you're in a ball park or have a skyline. It's hard to go wrong. Your limitations are access and time." With corporate photography, he has to make factories, refineries, offshore drilling platforms, petroleum tanks, giant mining trucks, and medical labs look like someplace we want to be. "I take pleasure in making those things look good; I find that fun." And most clients give him a lot of leeway. "It's often just, Go to this place and make cool pictures," knowing he's more than prepared to do just that. •

robertseale.com

Eric Minton is a writer and editor in Washington, D.C.

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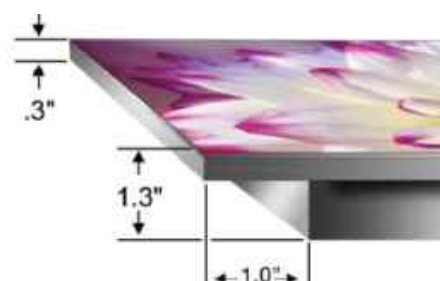
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JOIN YOUR LOCAL AFFILIATE

by Lori L. Craft, Cr. Photog.

► As 2016 winds down, many of us reflect on all that's transpired over the past year. You can't wrap it up into one single event or memory. It's 365 days of moments.

Like many of you, I've had days that I'd love to live over and over again, and I've had days that I wish had never happened. Thankfully, every day is a new one for us to

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PPA Affiliates are autonomous organizations that choose to partner with Professional Photographers of America. These groups provide valuable networking and educational opportunities for photographers. As an Affiliate, these groups can offer merits toward PPA degrees. Many Affiliates offer schools that provide educational opportunities on a state or regional basis.

To locate your local PPA Affiliate, search the directory at ppa.com/affiliates.

embrace and tackle with vigor and excitement.

In my tenure as PPA president, I've had the opportunity to travel to many state conventions and events hosted by PPA Affiliates. I've met so many amazing photographers; you've all made this girl feel very special. You've welcomed me with open arms and made me feel like one of the gang. I'm so encouraged to see how much passion and caring you have for your organizations and each other. It's like walking into a family reunion over and over. I know that each of these Affiliate organizations will continue to thrive and grow thanks to the commitment of such passionate individuals.

Belonging to a PPA Affiliate is a great way to connect and learn with other photographers in your area. There's something very special about this extended family of pros. My husband and I have personally experienced the friendships and support from the members of the Professional Photographers of Michigan. They've had our backs in many situations—when we've needed an additional photographer or to borrow equipment, and even when we've needed someone to capture our own family's portraits.

I want to encourage you to become a member of an Affiliate in your area because the benefits are priceless. And if you're a member already, ask yourself what you can do to get more involved. Make sure you're getting everything you can from your membership. It's so much more than just paying monetary dues.

Again, I want to thank everyone I've had the honor of meeting throughout the year for enriching my life. •

INSIDER TIPS ON IMAGING USA

ADVICE TO MAKE IT YOUR BEST CONVENTION EVER



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► Social media is abuzz with anticipation preceding the biggest annual show for professional photographers: Imaging USA in San Antonio next month. Whether this is your first time attending or you go every year, you'll find something new to enjoy at the world's longest-running photography convention and trade show.

PPA staffers offer up some enthusiastic guidance to prep you for the event:

- "The energy level is off the hook. It's impossible to be in a bad mood."

- "The diversity of products and information on the trade show floor is No. 1 for me. And often people don't realize that many of the speakers they see in the platform classes can also be heard speaking in exhibitors' booths. They should definitely check to see who is speaking on the Expo floor."

- "This thing is like the Mall of America

for photographers. You can buy pants—yes, pants—made for photographers. Or silicon buttons so that the shutter of your camera fits your pressing style better. Insane, unthinkable stuff."

- "You'll find yourself sitting next to some famous photographer or standing in line behind a great speaker or having your lunch with a PPA Board member. Everyone is part of the same big family, and it's really cool."

- "People are incredibly friendly—speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, award-winners. They are happy to be there and to talk, so it makes for an incredible environment."

- "You'll have Imaging USA withdrawal after that week. The noise, the people, the activities, the energy level—Imaging USA withdrawal. You'll quickly get over it, but you'll feel it."

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PPA CHARITIES AND CAMERAS FOR KIBERA



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ART KIDS

► PPA Charities has announced a new charity recipient for Imaging USA 2017 in San Antonio: Cameras for Kibera.

Cameras for Kibera's goal is to collect working cameras (with charger, battery, and memory card included) to be donated to young women in Kenya with an interest in photography. PPA Charities is accepting camera donations on behalf of the non-profit Carolina for Kibera, which sponsors the camera program.

Established in 2001, Carolina for Kibera is an international nongovernmental organization based in the Kibera slum of Nairobi, Kenya. It's part of the Center for Global Initiatives and is affiliated with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Imaging USA attendees can drop off camera donations (with charger, battery, and memory card) at the PPA Charities expo booth.

NEW AT THE IMAGING USA EXPO



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At the Imaging USA Expo, you can look at, try, and purchase the latest equipment right there. Some fun facts about this year's Expo:

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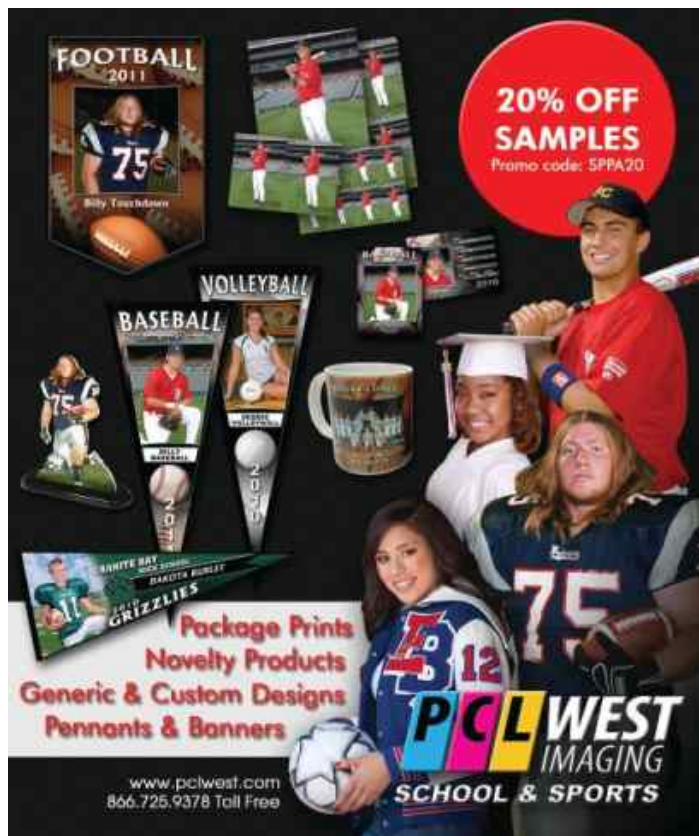
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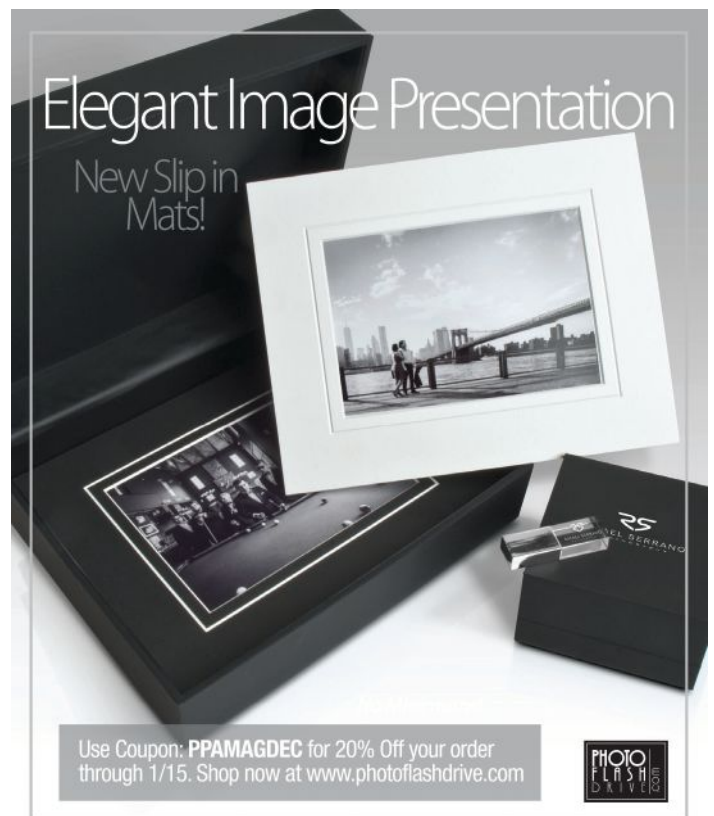
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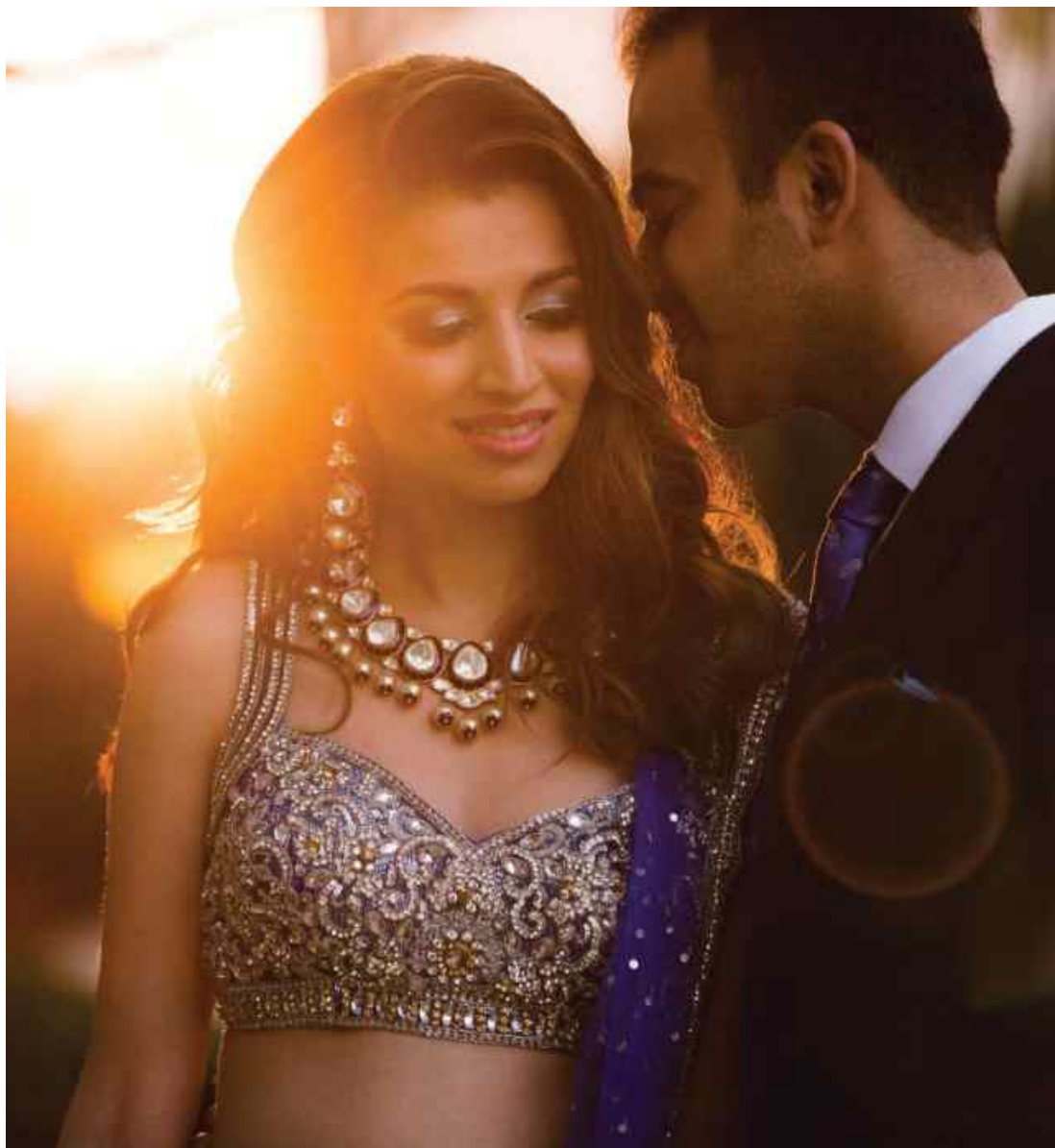
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